



# THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION  
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 64.

Price, Five Cents.

## BUFFALO BILL'S DEADSHOT PARD



DEADSHOT DEAN SENT A BULLET BETWEEN THE EYES OF THE LEADER OF THE DESPERADOES, JUST AS THEY RUSHED UPON THEIR PRISONER, BUFFALO BILL.





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## BUFFALO BILL'S DEAD-SHOT PARD;

OR,

## The Will-o'-the-Wisp of the Trails.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

### CHAPTER I.

#### BUFFALO BILL IN DANGER.

It was a balmy Sabbath Day in the mining country of Colorado, and the miners had knocked off work, as was the wont with most of them, for rest, enjoyment, a hunt, card-playing or carousing, as the humor suited them.

A mile distant from one of the camps was situated a lonely cabin upon a mountain spur, and under the shelter of a cliff.

It was a pretty spot, with a spring trickling from the cliff, forming a pool of clearest water a few feet distant from the door, and with a grand view of mountain, valley and river spread out before it.

There was a winding path up to the cabin, down to a trail which led to the cluster of mining-camps down the valley. a pile of wood at the door ready for use, a freshly-

killed deer hanging on a tree near, with several hungry wolves crouching in a thicket sniffing the meat and gazing longingly at it.

Within, the log cabin was rudely furnished, with cot, table, a bench and some cooking utensils, and without, seated by the door in an easy-chair made of hickory boughs and rope, sat the miner whose humble home the place was.

It was Carrol Dean, known in the mines as Deadshot Dean, from the fact that he had been attacked in the camps one night soon after his coming by a crowd of desperadoes, and had shot the leader dead by a bullet sent into the very center of his forehead, and broken the right arms of four others, thus disarming them with five shots, in a fight of one against five.

With this adventure he had stamped his claim to the name of Deadshot Dean and won the respect of the bet-



ter men of the community, and the fear of the bad element.

A handsome man he was as he sat there smoking his after-dinner pipe and with an open letter in his hand.

With a slight, but wiry form, about the medium height, well dressed for a miner, and with a face that was honest, fearless and full of determination, he looked just what he was, a true, manly man.

More or less luck had attended him since coming to the mines.

He had found the claim his father had bought from a retired miner, had struck it rich one day and held high hopes of a fortune, to discover the next day that the gold streak did not hold out.

Then poor luck had followed for months, with another streak of good fortune for a few days.

And so on it had gone with him, though he was slowly but surely getting ahead if fortune would only favor him.

With this end he had struggled for more than three years in his hard work, hoping for luck some day to "hit him big," as they called it in the mines.

The miner had just read a letter from home over and over again, and sighed that his loved ones were so far away and that perhaps years more might go by before he saw them.

Suddenly the sound of angry voices came to his ears, and he saw a group of men coming down in the trail, on the way to the settlement.

In their midst, and there were a score of them, was a man on horseback; his feet and hands were securely bound, while about his neck was a rope, the other end held by several men who were leading the way.

One glance at the man was sufficient to reveal to Carrol Dean that it was a man different by far from those who had him in their power, for he knew them as a wild and lawless band in the mines—men who were ready for any deed of violence and rapine.

The horseman was a man of striking appearance in face, form and general make-up.

He rode a fine horse, long-bodied, clean-limbed and well equipped.

The rider was tall, graceful and sinewy in build, with massive shoulders, and looking just as he was, a giant

in strength, quick in action as a panther and evidently one who possessed wonderful physical endurance.

He was dressed in buckskin leggings and hunting-shirt, top-boots and a broad-brimmed sombrero which was encircled by a silver cord and looped up upon the left side with a gold buffalo head, in which were set diamond eyes.

The face of the man was as handsome in feature as a woman's, his eyes dark and expressive, his mustache and imperial giving him a distinguished air and his long dark-brown hair fell in waving locks far below his shoulders.

Now he was bound hand and foot and looking like a captive lion, worried by a pack of yelping human wolves, for they were clamoring in noisy tones for his life, and when they reached Hangman's Gulch, half a mile below in the valley on the way to the settlement of the miners, that they would hang him was evident from their actions and speech.

"Ha! it is Buffalo Bill, the scout. The hill gang have got him and they intend to hang him—hang brave Buffalo Bill!" and the speaker seemed deeply moved.

"This must not be!" he at length cried, and he darted down the path to head off the desperadoes and their prisoner.

Carrol Dean had once met Buffalo Bill, when as the guide of a troop of cavalry he had camped one night by the wagon-train in which he had made his way westward, after leaving the railroads.

He had heard and often read of the scout, and had been glad to have a talk with him, finding him a courteous and pleasant companion.

Now he recognized him at a glance, though several years since he had seen him, and he at once knew that there was some deviltry going on—that the scout was in great peril.

So down the hill he bounded, as agile as a deer, following the path which brought him into the trail just ahead of the crowd of men and their prisoner.

"Yes; it is as I thought; they are the cut-throats of the mines, and Buffalo Bill is at their mercy. He needs a friend now, and I'll be that to the brave scout or perish with him," was the young miner's resolve.

Then, as the desperadoes approached, the resolute fellow called out:



"Ho, pard, what are you doing with Buffalo Bill a prisoner?"

"It hain't Buf-ler Bill, Deadshot Dean; but he's a pris'ner, and if yer wants ter see what we is doing with him, jist come along ter Hangman's Gulch and yer'll find out," responded Powder Face Pete, the leader of the gang.

The ruffian's face was blackened with powder specks and also disfigured by a wound from a knife, showing that he had had some very close calls from sudden and violent death.

He was a gambler and a desperado, and few men in the mines cared to risk a quarrel with Powder Face Pete.

"I tell you that it is Buffalo Bill, the Government scout and guide, for I have met him and I recognize him."

"Yes, I recall your face now, sir. I met you with a wagon-train bound West and we camped together one night. I remember that you showed me a picture of your wife, and how beautiful she was," said the scout.

"True, sir, you have a good memory indeed; but what is the trouble between you and these men?"

"Oh, they lariatd me and my horse, and got me foul before I had time to use my weapons, and they say that I am Silk Lasso Sam, the road-agent."

"It is false, as I can swear."

"And I kin swear thet he is not Buf'ler Bill," said Powder Face Pete.

"Then you would swear to a lie, though that would not surprise me in the least, Powder Face Pete, knowing your ugly record as I do," said the miner, quietly, and in spite of his peril Buffalo Bill laughed and said:

"You've got him down fine, sir."

"See here, Deadshot Dean, is yer seeking trouble with me?"

"I do not seek it, Powder Face Pete, and I shall not avoid it, for I do not fear any such bully as you are; but I shall not allow you to harm this man."

"Yer won't, won't yer?"

"No."

"Waal, he's our pris'ner, and I knows he is Silk Lasso Sam, while I hev got a big bulk o' money I tuk from him, and which he has robbed a Government paymaster of."

"He did take a large sum of money from me, sir, and I got it from Captain Lennox, the fort paymaster, whom I found dying by the side of the trail, for he had been fired

upon by road-agents and wounded. He gave me all he had with him, and wrote his will, which that wretch also has, and I was on my way to the fort when these devils caught me. That is all there is to it, sir."

"It is enough to enlist me on your side, in spite of the odds, and you have me to fight, Powder Face Pete, if you do not release that man and his possessions at once."

"Waal, I won't do it, fer he's a road-agent, as I knows, and we intends ter hang him in the gulch yonder, and try him arterwards."

"I say no, and I feel that your comrades will side with me," and Deadshot Dean placed himself before the crowd now, and faced them.

There were some who felt that it was best not to push matters against the scout, as the recognition of him by Deadshot Dean had done away with any doubt as to his identity, if they had felt any before.

But there were others who still clung by their leader.

He had the money, and they could say that they thought that Buffalo Bill was Silk Lasso Sam, whom they knew to be not unlike Buffalo Bill in appearance.

"Doer yer mean ter say, Deadshot Dean, that yer intends ter chip in here ag'in' me?" asked the desperado in a tone which he meant should terrify the one who had dared to interfere with him.

"It is just what I do mean to say, Powder Face Pete, for I shall resist the murderous intention of yourself and your cut-throat band, if I lose my own life in the attempt.

"And if I do I will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that you and others will accompany me upon the last long trail."

This was spoken with utter fearlessness, and the crowd saw that they had brought a dangerous and brave man to bay.

"Waal, Deadshot Dean, as yer seems ignorant of who I be, I has got ter edicate yer, I guesses, and so I'll tell yer thet I has a record in these mines of killin' over a dozen better men than you be, and ef yer interferes with me yer'll be writ down on my list as one who didn't know I was loaded for tenderfeet."

"Oh, I know that you are a desperado of the worst kind, and have a record as a murderer, a bully and a thief; but for all that I do interfere and tell you that you shall never raise hand against Buffalo Bill, bound



hand and foot as he is and at your mercy. Now, play your hand, Powder Face Pete, and play for life or death," said the young miner, coolly.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE MINER KEEPS HIS WORD

By a strange act of forgetfulness the desperadoes had not disarmed Buffalo Bill.

His rifle hung to his saddle-horn, his revolvers and knife were still in his belt.

They had bound his hands securely, and his feet were tied under his horse, and with him thus secure they had felt no dread even of him.

The crowd had stood grouped together, during the words passed between their ringleader and Deadshot Dean the miner.

They were with their leader wholly, though there were some who felt that their prisoner was not the outlaw, Silk Lasso Sam, and the slightest thing would have caused them to show a willingness to compromise.

Such was the intention when the miner, so pluckily and alone, threw the gauntlet of defiance in the teeth of Powder Face Pete.

The latter gave a glance into the face of the miner, and then at Buffalo Bill.

He saw that Deadshot Dean meant all that he said, and more, he knew his record.

Then he looked at Buffalo Bill, and the latter said with a mocking laugh:

"You got it pat that time, Powder Face, so what are you going to do about it?"

Before replying the desperado turned for a look at his companions.

He saw the situation at a glance.

About half were in favor of retreating from their position of hanging their prisoner.

The others looked undecided, with perhaps two or three who were heart and hand with Powder Face Pete.

The latter was disappointed.

He had hoped to be fully backed up.

Were the prisoner any other than Buffalo Bill, he would have been.

But he was not a man to retreat when odds were in his favor, and so he turned again to the miner, drawing his revolver as he did so.

When he faced him, however, he found himself covered by the miner's pistol.

"Yer darned fools, why didn't yer tell me he was drawin' on me?" he queried.

"It was done so quick, pard," answered one.

"Yer axes me, Buf'ler Bill, what I intends ter do about this chipper young man's chin music?"

"Yes, and I notice you call me by my name."

The man uttered an oath at having been so cleverly picked up.

"I tells yer now what I'll do."

"Well, talk quick or act!" came in the commanding voice of the miner.

"I intends ter hang you, Buf'ler Bill, and this pilgrim, too, who has chipped in when it wasn't his play."

"All right, Powder Face Pete! Fire away!" said the miner, coolly.

"Yer has got me covered, Deadshot Dean, so I calls upon my friends ter tackle yer."

"If one of them attempts to carry out your threat against Buffalo Bill, I shall plant a bullet between your eyes, Powder Face Pete, and I make no idle boast," assured the miner.

The men hesitated, for they knew just how the miner had won his name as a deadshot.

"Pards, is yer goin' ter let one man bully yer all?" cried the ringleader, savagely.

"It hain't fer us ter say, Pete; so tell us, if you says crowd him."

"I says rush him, pards," suddenly cried Powder Face Pete, and with his words he threw his rifle to a level to fire.

But quicker than was his movement came the pull upon the trigger of the miner's revolver.

Just as Deadshot Dean had threatened, he sent a bullet between the eyes of the leader of the desperadoes as they rushed upon their prisoner, Buffalo Bill.

The stricken Pete sprang high in the air, and fell all in a heap just as Deadshot Dean fired a second and a third time, and in each instance broke the bone of the right arm of one of the desperadoes as they leveled their weapons to fire.

Then, quick as a flash, Deadshot Dean, with his knife in his left hand, severed the rope that bound Buffalo Bill's hands, still keeping his revolver at a level upon the crowd of now surging and infuriated desperadoes.



The moment that the crowd saw that Buffalo Bill had been set free by Deadshot Dean, they broke and fled for cover, leaving their leader dead upon the scene, while the two men with their right arms shattered by the bullets of the miner's unerring revolver followed them, writhing with pain—all the fight taken out of them.

"Well, Pard Deadshot, you are a dandy in a scrimmage and no mistake. That was the prettiest work I ever witnessed—so cool and neat. Give me your hand, and let me tell you that I owe you my life, and when Buffalo Bill tells you that he is yours to command—he means every word of it," and the scout grasped the hand of Deadshot Dean and wrung it warmly.

"I am most glad to have served you, Buffalo Bill; but let me set your feet free, and then you can take from the body of that man all that he robbed you of. He knew well enough that you were not Silk Lasso Sam, the outlaw, only in some way he had heard of your having a large lot of money with you, and sought to get it.

"Now, come to my cabin up yonder on the hill, and leave these vultures skulking there to look after their dead and wounded," and the miner pointed to the crowd of desperadoes, who had halted some distance off and were anxiously watching the scout and that man with the terrible gun—Deadshot Dean.

They were cowed; there was no doubting that fact.

The death of their leader, a man who had been a terror in the camps, and the groaning and whining of the two wounded men gave them a wholesome example of what death and suffering were.

But they viewed with anxious eyes Buffalo Bill bending over Powder Face Pete, and taking from his body the things he had stolen from him.

"I will call some of those men here, Buffalo Bill, to see that you simply take your own," said the miner.

"Yes, that is a good idea, sir, or they will accuse me of robbing him."

"Ho, men; three of you come here."

In answer to the miner's call there was a stir among the desperadoes, and yet none of them obeyed.

"You are in no danger.

"I wish to talk with three of you."

After some delay there were three who ventured to approach, the others watching them anxiously.

"See here, men, I wish you to take notice of just what Buffalo Bill intends taking from the body of your leader.

"You know what he was robbed of, and he wants only that which you took from him," said the miner.

"I told Pete he were making a mistake, thet I knowed Buf'ler Bill, and he were wrong," said one.

Buffalo Bill turned and eyed the speaker a moment.

Then he said quietly:

"You lie, and you know it, for you were the one who urged him on; but the quarrel is over, unless the colonel sends a troop here from the fort to find the men who first attacked and wounded Paymaster Lennox and then ambushed and captured me, and robbed me, threatening also to hang me."

The words of the scout seemed to impress the men greatly.

They began to feel that they had gone too far.

Then the scout continued:

"You may tell your friends, too, that if this miner has any harm befall him for his act this day in protecting a Government officer, that the colonel will see to it that every man in this gang who attacked me to-day—and I have you all spotted—will be hunted down as though you were wolves.

"See, here are the papers taken from the paymaster, and here is the money.

"Now comes his watch, chain, ring, and sleeve-buttons, with his pocketbook.

"Yes, and here is my watch and chain and my money, too.

"You see, of his own he has two packs of cards, half-a-dozen finger-rings—all stolen, I'll guarantee—his weapons, and a roll of money, which I will count so that you three cannot divide it among you.

"Yes, just sixty-three dollars, see!

"Now I have done with you."

"As I am also, only carry away your dead leader for burial, and you had better take your two wounded men on to the camps to the doctor there.

"Now, Buffalo Bill, I am ready," and the miner led the way up the steep path to his cabin, Buffalo Bill following on foot and leading his horse.

As they reached the cabin they looked back, and saw the desperadoes moving off on the trail with their dead and wounded, and going in the direction of the camps.

"You have a snug little home here, sir," said the scout.

"No place is home, Mr. Cody, without one's loved ones," returned the miner.



"Very true, sir; and it is a hard life one leads here, hunting for a fortune, away from all he loves; but I hope you are doing well?"

"I am making a little money, sir, and hope for a change for the better, for I am anxious to get back to my home in Tennessee."

"Now, with me it is different, for upon the border is my home, and my duties call me here."

"You would make a great scout, sir,"

"You think so?"

"Oh, yes, for though I have heard of Deadshot Dean, I had no idea he was one I had met before."

"I heard of your affair that gave you your name, sir, and to-day's act will add to your fame."

"Such as it is, though, I am not ambitious to pose as a man-killer."

"No, I can understand that, for had you been you would have killed those other two men instead of breaking their arms as you did."

"Yes, I did not wish their lives upon my hands, but Powder Face Pete I was forced to kill, and he was one of the worst men in the mines."

"Look out for his gang, let me urge you, for they will try to avenge him; but now that I have met you I will try to give you a call now and then, show myself and my scouts among the camps, and see if the colonel will not send a troop through occasionally, for it will have a good effect and show these lawless fellows that we are watching them."

"I thank you, Mr. Cody, but I keep close to my cabin, work hard and only go to the camps for my mail and provisions."

"But you will remain with me to-night, for I have a spare cot and plenty to eat."

The scout accepted the invitation willingly, and so his horse was staked out near, a good supper prepared, and until late into the night the two friends talked together.

### CHAPTER III.

#### PIONEER POST.

Fort Pioneer, or Pioneer Post, as it was generally called, was located about sixty miles from the Yellow Dust mining camps, where Carrol Dean had been so long toiling for a fortune.

In the mining camps of Yellow Dust Valley, which ex-

tended some twenty miles along the stream, were some three thousand souls, scattered in the cañons, mountains and glens contiguous to the central mining camp, which was known as Pocket City.

The element of such a community was naturally vicious, where so many reckless souls were gathered in the struggle to win fortune.

Where two-thirds were honest workers in their claims, one-third was the disturbing element of professional money-makers in any way it could be obtained, with fugitives from justice, cutthroats, and rowdies in general to make up the population.

Here and there some gold-hunter, or perhaps store-keeper had brought his family, so that occasionally a woman and a few children were seen, but seldom.

A coach ran from the mines once in a week, and returned as often, bringing the mail and what passengers cared to go or come.

Beyond the gold belt of this wild community was the danger line of the Indian country, and this extended north and south for many a long mile.

Over these camps and the Indian country, with the settlements of cattlemen further eastward, the commandant of Pioneer Post held jurisdiction, and the work was such as to keep him busy.

There was an Overland stage trail running westward, another going to and from the settlements, and a third that had its terminus at the post, all weekly lines, and these had to be guarded from the road agents that infested the way.

The cattlemen had to have their herds protected from horse and cow thieves and Indians, and the miners looked to the military for protection also from an organized band of gold-robbers and an occasional dash of the Indians upon them.

About the post were some settlers, farmers, and herders—there were large herds of Government cattle to look after; and altogether Colonel Oscar Dunwoody had his hands full in caring for those who were under his especial protection.

To aid him he had five companies of cavalry, one battery of light artillery of eight guns, and three battalions of infantry of three companies each.

Then there was a troop of scouts, thirty in number, under the captaincy of Buffalo Bill, who had as a reserve to call upon in need half-a-hundred daring fighters and



riders, who were part scout, part guide, part Indian-fighter, and the balance cowboys, and they were in charge of the Government herds.

In case of a large uprising among the Indians, Colonel Dunwoody could call to his aid over a thousand volunteers, of miners, cattlemen, and settlers, so that he could place a force in the field, on a couple of days' notice, of over two thousand fighters, and good ones, too.

Pioneer Post was located upon a bluff overhanging a river, and heavily timbered.

Around the base of the bluff ran a stockade wall, crescent-shaped, extending from the river below, around to the river above the fort proper, and the space was held in reserve for the cattle and horses, should they be penned in by a siege of the Indians.

There were fields of corn, oats, and wheat near, a vegetable farm, sawmill and gristmill, so that the fort was almost self-supporting.

The top of the bluff was a level plateau, many acres in size, with the barracks of the soldiers built at equal distances on the crescent line of fortifications, the guns having positions between them, and the rear of the cabins being made into a fort wall with a breastwork of logs upon the roof.

The officers' quarters extended along the bluff, with the headquarters the dividing line, the hospitals, storehouses, sutlers' and officers' clubhouse being beyond the stables at the further end.

A stockade wall ran along the bluff its whole length, to protect the garrison from shots upon the other side of the river, and there were ports for the artillery and rifles, with a lookout tower, and sheltered pumps to draw up water in case of a siege.

Into this frontier post it would have taken an immense army of redskins to gain an entrance, or do much damage, and all in the fort felt their security, for nearly all of the married officers, and many of the soldiers, had their families with them.

That the chief of scouts, William F. Cody, was popular at Pioneer Post was evidenced by the manner in which he was received upon his arrival there the afternoon of his return from the Yellow Dust Valley mines, where, but for Carrol Dean, the Lone Miner, he would have died at the rope's end.

The sentinel saluted him, the cowboys gave him a wave

of their hats as a welcome, and several officers he passed spoke pleasantly to him.

Some soldiers grouped together near the stockade gate welcomed him back, and the children, as he rode toward headquarters, cheered him, and uttered many a hearty greeting.

"The chief of scouts wishes to see you, sir," said Colonel Dunwoody's orderly, entering the room where that officer sat, conversing with Captain Dick Caruth and Lieutenant Vassar Turpin, two of his officers.

"Show him in at once, orderly," was the colonel's reply.

Then, as the scout entered, he said pleasantly:

"Ho, Cody, you know the old saying about speaking of the devil, for we were talking of you when the orderly announced your name."

"It came nearer never being announced on this trip, sir, than ever before, but, thanks to a brave miner, I am here to report to you, Colonel Dunwoody, and I regret to say, sir, that I have sad news for you," said Buffalo Bill, quietly.

"Indeed; I am sorry to hear this.

"Sit down, and tell me if there has anything gone wrong, and I hope the Indians are not on the warpath, for I have just told these gentlemen why I had sent you off on a scout, to see what the redskins were about."

"The Indians are uneasy, sir, as they always are when hatching trouble, but I do not believe they will go on the warpath for some time yet.

"I went into their country, and watched their villages closely, unseen, of course, by them.

"I returned by Yellow Dust Valley, and fortunately, for I came upon Captain Lennox, your paymaster, dying by the roadside."

"Lennox dying?" cried the colonel, with some excitement.

"He is dead, sir," was the sad response.

There was a silence of fully a minute as each one present recalled the honest, good face of the comrade they had lost.

"He had arrived at the station sooner than he expected, sir, he told me, so would not wait for an escort, nor would he take the stage coach, as he feared being robbed.

"He therefore decided to come through alone on horse-



back, and bought a horse and outfit at the station for this purpose."

"He should have awaited an escort."

"There was one thing against that, sir, as he said he was fearful of being robbed if he remained, for the station was overrun with desperadoes."

"Some of them must have suspected him of having money, and sent word ahead to the road agents, for he rode into an ambush, and when he was ordered to halt, broke through."

"Brave fellow."

"But he was wounded three times, sir, and his horse received a slight wound, which, however, did not retard his speed, for he distanced all pursuit."

"But the noble animal at last fell from fatigue, and, after going some miles further, Paymaster Lennox sank down on the side of the trail unable to go further."

"There I found him several hours after, and he was dying."

"Poor Lennox," the colonel said, feelingly.

"While I was with him two horsemen passed, who said they were miners, and I sent word by them for the surgeon at the mines to come to my aid at once."

"But he died soon after, and I took from him the money and other things he had of value."

"Here they are, sir, and, as you see, he had a large sum of money with him," and Buffalo Bill placed the several packages upon the table.

"He had, indeed, and you were fortunate to be near, Cody."

"I wrote down what he asked me to do, sir, for the Government, and of a private nature, and here are the papers."

"You have done well, Cody, and you deserve the highest praise."

"Thank you, Colonel Dunwoody."

"Of course, I had to bury the captain there, where he died, wrapping the body in his blanket and digging a grave with my bowie."

"I covered the grave with heavy stones, and then, as it was night, remained for rest until the following morning."

"The next afternoon as I was near Yellow Dust Valley I rode into an ambush."

"What?"

"My horse was lassoed, and I had three lariats thrown

over me, sir, while some dozen men sprang out and covered me with their revolvers."

"They dared do this in that valley?"

"It was near Pocket City, sir, and they were the wicked element of the mines who did it, and I think I recognized the two men among them whom I saw when I was with Captain Lennox, though they had changed their appearance to deceive me."

"The scoundrels!"

"Of course, sir, resistance was useless—out of the question, and not thinking they would dare harm or rob me, I could do nothing else than surrender."

"I was at once bound to my horse, however, robbed of all I had of the captain's and my own, and then led toward Hangman's Gulch to be hanged as Silk Lasso Sam, the outlaw chief, for whom they pretended to take me."

"You were taken for that infamous scamp Silk Lasso Sam?" cried the colonel in utter amazement.

"Yes, sir, and as far as looks go I believe I was complimented, for he is said to be a handsome devil," said Buffalo Bill, with a smile.

"Yes, and a vicious devil as well, with a heart of iron and a conscience of india rubber."

"I have heard him described, sir, as being a man very much of the style of Cody," said Captain Dick Caruth, who was one of the handsomest men in the army.

"Doctor Powell has seen him, sir—in fact, was robbed by him, and can tell us," Lieutenant Vassar Turpin remarked.

"Who takes my name in vain?" said a cheery voice at the door, and in walked the one whose name Lieutenant Turpin had just uttered.

It was Dr. Frank Powell, the post surgeon, and a man whose name and fame is world-wide, for in addition to being a skilled physician, a most expert surgeon and perfect soldier, he was noted as one of the heroes of the plains, a scout and Indian fighter whose record is second to that of Buffalo Bill alone.

"I am glad you have come, Powell; sit down and hear Cody's story," said the colonel to the dashing, handsome surgeon, with a nature as gentle as a woman's and a heart like a lion's when aroused.

"Cody was just saying that he had been mistaken for Silk Lasso Sam, the outlaw chief, though first let me tell you that he brings the sad news of poor Lennox having been killed by the road agents."



"Ha! Lennox killed, and by those cowardly coyotes.

"They shall pay for this," and the face of the surgeon changed in a flash, showing what he could be when aroused by hatred or anger.

Buffalo Bill told of the death of the paymaster, and of his capture for Silk Lasso Sam, and Dr. Powell said, thoughtfully:

"Well, you do look like the fellow, Cody.

"You are about his build, and he wears his hair as you do, with mustache and imperial, also.

"But his face is darker, his eyes are blue, a bad combination, by the way, black hair and blue eyes, for they do not go together, and he has a sneer, a grin, a smile, all combined, upon his mouth like a hyena showing his teeth, while you, Bill, you know, have the sanctimonious look about the mouth of an army chaplain, old in the service.

"Still you might be mistaken for Silk Lasso Sam, especially if there was reason for so doing."

"Well, I came very near being hanged for him, and would have been but for the rescue by one of the gamest men I ever crossed the trail of."

"That is saying a good deal, Cody," said the colonel, with a smile.

"I will tell you what he did, sir, and you can judge.

"His cabin was upon the spur of a mountain, and he was enjoying his pipe and rest after a Sabbath-day dinner, when my captors came in sight with me.

"He recognized me, having met me several years ago with you, Captain Caruth, when we camped one night near a wagon-train of emigrants and kept them from being attacked by Indians."

"Yes, I remember the circumstance," said the captain.

"He at once came to my rescue, halted the gang, and asked why I was a prisoner.

"The leader, a gentleman by the name of Powder Face Pete, and one of the worst men in the mines, said that I was Silk Lasso Sam, and had killed and robbed an army paymaster, and I was to be hanged when we reached Hangman's Gulch, half a mile beyond. The miner, who is known as Deadshot Dean——"

"I have heard of him," said Surgeon Powell.

"Yes; he made his record as a shot one night when attacked by a band of ruffians. He said that I was not Silk Lasso Sam, that I was Buffalo Bill, and he would protect me; so invited Powder Face to play his hand. There was some talk, and next Deadshot Dean said that if any of the

band made an effort to attack him he would plant a bullet between the eyes of Mister Powder Face Pete. The leader then made an effort to fire, but the miner kept his word, nailing him squarely between the eyes, and breaking the right arms of the two men who had been most anxious to back up their chief."

"Well, Cody, he has rendered the Government splendid service in saving you and the money poor Lennox was robbed of, and anything I can do for him I shall be most happy to do," said Colonel Dunwoody.

"He is not a man to accept aid, I am sure, sir, but I think he might be put under good pay as a Government detective and spy on the movements of the road agents, and this would help him, sir."

"The very man I want, and in the very place I need him, for this Silk Lasso Sam and his band must be wiped out," said the colonel, with determination.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE MINER SPY.

The story of Buffalo Bill had been listened to by all three of the officers with the deepest of interest.

That the miner Carrol Dean had won the admiration of all by his daring and nerve was certain, and Colonel Dunwoody said, after the scout had finished his story:

"Well, Cody, your friend deserves all the praise we can bestow upon him, and I will certainly be glad to reward him in any way he will accept recompense."

"As I said, Colonel Dunwoody, I am sure that he is not one to be paid for a service, for he is a gentleman of refinement and education."

"But you think his claim is not a paying one, Cody?"

"He did not say as much, sir, but he told me he hoped it would improve."

"And any services he might render he would accept pay for, you think?"

"I am sure, sir, if given some such position as I referred to, he would feel that he was earning his pay."

"Well, I am entitled under late orders, to employ a detective on the Overland to get some clew to the robbers who have of late been rifling the mails.

"The position will pay fairly well, say a hundred dollars a month, and I can offer it to this miner, telling him to devote what time he can to obtaining clews to the retreats of these robbers, their number and identity."



"I feel sure, sir, that he would do this, for he told me he would be glad to aid in any way in his power to drive off the robbers that infest this part of the country, and spoke of it as a shame that Silk Lasso Sam had not been caught in spite of all the traps laid to insnare him."

"Yes, it is a pity and a shame, and yet I feel that we have done all in our power to entrap that outlaw chief and his band."

"Yes, colonel, and he is getting bolder," Captain Dick Caruth said.

"He is, indeed, but I hope we will soon be able to run him to earth."

"But, Cody, this robbery and murder of poor Lennox was not by Silk Lasso Sam, you say?"

"You misunderstood me, colonel, for if it was not by Silk Lasso Sam, I cannot but believe that Powder Face Pete was one of his men, and so thought Deadshot Dean also."

"He did have that idea, then?"

"Yes, sir, and was confident that Pocket City was the headquarters of Silk Lasso Sam's spies."

"Then the miner will be in the very spot to act as detective, and when you return for the body of Captain Lennox, as I wish you to do, you can carry word to Deadshot Dean that he is to serve as a Secret Service man for me, under the pay of one hundred dollars per month."

"He will have to report to me in some way any discoveries he may make, and endeavor all in his power to break up this band of frontier lawbreakers."

"Yes, sir, I will so report to him your wishes, and I believe you will find him just the man you wish in your service."

"I sincerely hope so, Cody; but now you need rest, especially as I wish you to start back upon the morrow with an escort to get the remains of Paymaster Lennox, and bring them to the fort for burial."

Buffalo Bill now arose and departed, the colonel remarking after he had left:

"There is one of the gamest men I ever knew, and as modest as he is brave."

"I only wish I had more like him in my command."

"He is all that you say he is, Colonel Dunwoody, as I have had reason to know a hundred times or more, for Buffalo Bill has saved me from death on many an occasion," earnestly remarked Surgeon Frank Powell.

"And it appears to me, Powell, that there is a tradition

that you have often saved the life of Buffalo Bill, and are just as modest about your achievements as he is," Captain Caruth remarked.

"What is the use of boasting of one's own deeds, Dick, when I can leave it to such good friends of mine as you are to do it for me?" Frank Powell responded with a smile.

After some further conversation upon the subject, Colonel Dunwoody decided that it would be well to send a few soldiers under Captain Caruth to Yellow Dust Valley for the body of Paymaster Lennox, and that Surgeon Powell was to accompany them, while Buffalo Bill was to act as guide to the spot where the body had been buried.

Of course, the soldiers were not to visit the cabin of Deadshot Dean, as it might arouse suspicion against the miner, but, if possible, the officers were to see and have a talk with him upon the new duties he was to enter upon.

This being decided upon, the next morning the soldiers rode out of the fort with Buffalo Bill leading as guide.

## CHAPTER V.

### SILK LASSO SAM.

Among the greatest worries which Colonel Dunwoody had to contend with upon the frontier was the band of road agents who infested the trails, holding up coaches, travelers on horseback, wagon-trains, and now and then robbing a ranch or mining camp.

These were said to be from a dozen to half a hundred in number, never struck their blows twice in the same spot, and were as cunning as foxes, defying capture in spite of the most vigorous pursuit by ten times their number sent against them.

They were more troublesome than the Indians, equally as much to be feared, and from their chief down rewards had been offered upon their heads, dead or alive.

One reward was from the Government, of five thousand for their chief and one thousand for any of the men of his band.

This was duplicated by the reward offered by the Overland Stage Company, while a third reward was offered by the settlers of like amount, and the miners of the camps equaled it.

Then there was a fifth reward in a purse of one thousand dollars put up by Colonel Dunwoody and his officers



at the fort for the capture of the outlaw chief, dead or alive.

It was not to be wondered at that with the sum of twenty-one thousand dollars offered for his head the chief of the outlaws was greatly sought after, while the capture, or killing, of one of his men would bring four thousand dollars to the man who captured or killed him.

The band was known from their appearing first in one place and then in another as "The Will-o'-the-Wisps," and their leader had won the name of Silk Lasso Sam from the fact that he carried a beautifully woven lariat of real silk, which he was capable of using with astonishing skill.

What his real name was no one knew, or where he had come from, though it was said, as his equipments and dress were Mexican, that he had been a Texan bandit driven into Mexico, and then had made his way northward to the frontier to again turn to his deeds of outlawry.

His men spoke of him as captain, calling him by no name, though to the people of the border he was Silk Lasso Sam. He had once left for the East, promising to reform and become an honest man, but he was soon back again, engaged in new deeds of crime.

The deeds of this outlaw were numerous and cruel, and he handled his band with the skill of a trained soldier.

Where his retreat was had puzzled the best scouts, and yet that he had a hiding place for the quantities of plunder he often got possession of, and a herding place for the horses and stock he robbed the post, settlement and mining camps of, there was no doubt whatever.

But where it was located had not yet been discovered.

To-day he was seen upon one stage trail, and to-morrow at the mining camps.

One day he was seen at the fort, or near it, and again in the settlements, always in a different disguise and yet always leaving a proof that Silk Lasso Sam had been in the midst of his foes.

The man seemed to love to play with the most deadly danger, and would laugh at all efforts to capture him.

That he had spies in the mining camps, settlement and even at the fort was without doubt true, for he seemed to know of the movement of trains coming westward that were valuable, and of the sending eastward of gold from the mines.

If a stage coach brought passengers with money or

jewelry of value, that coach was almost certain to be held up by Silk Lasso Sam.

He always demanded implicit obedience to his orders, and if resisted in his robberies he would at once become merciless.

The most thrilling and terrible stories were told of the cruelties of Silk Lasso Sam, and yet few could vouch for them as being true.

Surgeon Frank Powell had once been in the coach which had been halted by the Will-o'-the-Wisps.

The surgeon was asleep at the time, and, awakening suddenly, discovered the situation.

Resistance was useless, for the coach was covered by a dozen rifles.

"You are Frank Powell, the surgeon-scout?" asked the outlaw leader, looking curiously at the officer.

"I am, and you are Silk Lasso Sam, the outlaw?"

"I am, and as I admire a man of nerve I shall not rob you," was the answer of the outlaw.

"Oh, I ask no favors of you, and I accept the situation with the others, be it what it may," answered the surgeon.

"As you insist, I will rob you, and having refused the favor I sought to show you, remember that the next time we meet it will be your life I will take, for I never forgive a slight."

"Just as you please, sir, and let me state that I will accept the gauntlet you throw down when next we meet, that it be your life or mine."

"It is a bargain," was the smiling reply of Silk Lasso Sam, and all who knew the two men felt that it would be a duel to the death when and wherever they met each other.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### THE ACCEPTANCE.

The sun was just setting on the Tuesday following his Sabbath-day adventure with the band of desperadoes under Powder Face Pete, when Deadshot Dean lighted his pipe and took a seat in his rustic easy-chair in front of his cabin.

He had worked hard in the mine all day, and had gotten but a few dollars in precious metal.

Returning to his home, he had eaten his supper, and then sat down to rest and view the grand sunset, a delight



he enjoyed immensely while he thought of the loved ones at home.

Suddenly the sound of hoofs fell upon his ears, and he saw coming around the bend in the trail where he had seen the desperadoes approaching with Buffalo Bill no other than the scout himself.

Following him were two officers in uniform, and close upon their heels came a score of soldiers, with two negro servants and several pack-horses bringing up their rear.

"Ah! the scout is back soon, and I suppose intends to hunt down those ruffians who attacked him.

"It is nightfall, and there is a fine camping place there on the brook, while I can take care of the officers; so I will hail them."

So saying, Carrol Dean arose and hastened down the path toward the trail.

"Ho, Scout Cody, glad to see you again.

"Will not those gentlemen share with you my hospitality for the night, while the men can find an excellent camping-place near?

"I will be glad to have you, gentlemen," and the miner turned to the two officers who just then rode up.

Buffalo Bill shook Carrol Dean warmly by the hand, and presented him to Captain Dick Caruth and Surgeon Frank Powell, who greeted him warmly.

"Mr. Dean, our desire is to have a talk with you," said Captain Caruth.

"Yes, gentlemen?"

"We are aware of your splendid service so daringly rendered Buffalo Bill, and through him to the Government in saving the large sum of money of which Paymaster Lennox had been robbed."

"A man would be a cowardly cur indeed, sir, to sit by and see a pack of wolves destroy a man and not go to his aid, no matter what the odds."

"There are men who would take such chances, true, but they are not found every day, and Colonel Dunwoody, commanding this military district, is anxious to show his appreciation in some way of your services."

"Permit me to request that he do so by utterly ignoring anything that I did, Captain Caruth."

"If you feel thus about it, I will say no more, sir, for I can well appreciate how a brave man, acting from a sense of duty, must feel.

"But there is one thing that we are anxious to have you do for us?"

"Certainly, if in my power."

"You are aware that this frontier is cursed by the presence upon it of a band of outlaws known as the Will-o'-the-Wisps?"

"Yes, sir; they attacked my home one night, a year ago."

"Indeed, and robbed you?"

"They only got a little lead, sir, in the place of gold."

"Ah! you beat them off?"

"I opened fire, sir, from the roof of my cabin, which you see has a log breastwork in front and on the sides, and a ladder runs up along the chimney to a trap in the roof.

"I fired two shots, sir, and they ran off."

"Did you do any damage?"

"As you go down the trail, to-morrow, you will notice two graves under a large pine tree, sir, and therein are buried the two Will-o'-the-Wisps;" and the miner spoke with the utmost modesty of his exploit.

"You have had cause to dread the country, sir; but while you remain here it is the wish of Colonel Dunwoody that you accept the position of Secret Service man for him. In other words, become the detective, the spy upon the movements of the Will-o'-the-Wisps, and endeavor to gain some clew by which they can be cornered and captured."

"I understand, sir."

"I may remark, incidentally, sir, that the pay is one hundred dollars per month, and I will leave with you a good horse, and arrange with you regarding your reports to headquarters.

"I certainly hope you will not refuse, Mr. Dean."

"Permit me also to urge your acceptance of the offer," said Surgeon Powell, while Buffalo Bill remarked:

"Yes, Deadshot, you are just the man we want in this place, so do not refuse."

"I shall accept," was the prompt response of the miner.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE AGED HORSEMAN.

Carrol Dean saw the soldiers ride away from his cabin with mingled feelings in his breast.

"I have another chance to make money now, and at odd times from my mining work, and though the peril is great, I am glad that I accepted the position, for it will get me



home that much sooner, and if my mine should fail, enable me to lay up a few more hundreds," he said as he sat musing in front of his cabin.

"Now, what is the best way to go about this detective work?"

"I have half a mind to confide in Bonnie Belle, for she always has seemed friendly to me; but then, one does not know whom he can trust out here, and the suspicion will come upon me that she is secretly leagued with the Will-o'-the-Wisps."

Bonnie Belle was a woman who owned the hotel and gambling den at Pocket City. She was a young, pretty, well-educated woman, and admired and respected by all the miners, desperadoes and rough characters in the town, who stood greatly in awe of her.

"No, I will not trust her until I am certain she will not prove a traitress, for in spite of her velvety ways she may be a tigress," he added.

"Now to change my mode of living somewhat, and mingle with those wild spirits at Pocket City. I will have to gamble, too, I suppose, and drink, but a professional gambler and a drunkard I never can become."

After musing for a while longer Carrol Dean took his way toward his claim.

It was beyond the spur, up in a cañon through which flowed a small stream.

He had "worked" the cañon up to the end at the cliffs, hunting in the stream among the rocks and at the roots of trees for the precious metal, and at last had found streaks in the cliffs into which he had dug with more or less success.

He entered the cavity, and began work, carefully sifting the loose earth as he dug it, and when he stopped for his dinner had gathered the largest quantity of golden grains which he had found in many a long day.

"Buffalo Bill has brought me luck," he said, cheerily, and keeping on with his work, he only left off when the shadows began to deepen.

"Fully twenty dollars to-day," he said, weighing the tiny grains in his hand, as he started homeward.

As he turned into the trail he came upon a horseman.

He was a man with long iron-gray hair and beard; wore iron-framed spectacles, and was dressed rather shabbily, while his horse and outfit were of little value.

"Ho, pard, I'm glad ter meet yer, fer I wants ter know

if this be ther trail ter Pocket City?" called out the old man.

"Yes, sir, it is the trail, and Pocket City lies only little over a mile and a half beyond."

"Thankee; but does yer know a man there by ther name o' Peter Swain, for he is my son, and I'm a-hunting his camp, as luck hev gone hard with me of late?"

"No, sir, I do not know such a man; but will you not halt for the night with me?"

"Thankee, no, for I must git on and find Peter.

"It's strange yer don't know him, for he gits acquainted easy, and though some thinks he is a bad lot, he's been a good boy ter me, and he's all I has got in ther world now ter love."

"Peter Swain, you say his name is?" said Carrol Dean, thoughtfully.

"Yas, pard, and yer'd know him if once yer seen him, fer his face looks like a turkey egg with ther powder burn in it, and they does call him Powder Face Pete, I l'arn."

"Powder Face Pete!"

The miner started as he uttered the words, and his face changed color.

The old man was going to seek his son, one whom he would never find, one who was in his grave, placed there by his hand.

"He's been a good boy to me, and he's all I has got now in the world to love," mused Carrol Dean, repeating the old man's words.

How could he tell him that his boy was dead, slain by himself?

No, he could not do so, and so he said nothing about knowing him, and the old man rode on his way toward Pocket City.

This meeting affected the miner greatly, and as he ascended the hill to his cabin he halted by the graves of the two men whom he had killed when they attacked his cabin.

"Oh! the curse of killing one's own kind, even in self-defense," he said, bitterly, as he went on his way.

He did not get his supper, for his usually good appetite was gone.

At last he said:

"I will go on after that old man, and see that he is cared for at the Frying Pan.



"I will ask Bonnie Belle to give him food and lodging at my expense, and some money, too.

"Poor old man, how I feel for him!"

Closing up his cabin, he shouldered his rifle, with which to kill any game that might cross his path on the way to Pocket City, and set out back along the spur, taking a way that was nearer, and which he knew would bring him out into the trail in Hangman's Gulch.

His path led him to a cliff overhanging Hangman's Gulch, and it was a steep climb down this of some sixty feet.

But Carrol Dean halted upon the cliff suddenly, his eyes having become riveted upon something he beheld in the cañon below.

That something was the old man who had left him a short while before, and yet he was not alone.

The one with him was Bonnie Belle, the fair landlady of the Frying Pan, and the two had dismounted from their horses, and were talking earnestly together.

The miner would not have ordinarily seen anything strange in the meeting of Bonnie Belle and the aged horseman in Hangman's Gulch.

But in this instance he did, for there was hardly a man to be found in the mines who would pass through that place alone.

The trail to Pocket City led around it, around the base of the mountain, not through the canyon, which was a longer distance to the camps.

It seemed hardly probable that an old man would turn from the well-marked trail into the cañon where there was no trace of tracks, without some object in view.

Yet this old man had done so.

And then, too, there was a young woman alone going through a place where men seldom went, and only then in crowds to hang some unfortunate who was deemed guilty of breaking border laws.

The place was alive with cruel memories, for there had been half-a-hundred men put to death there.

There were graves by the score to mark the place, and they were scattered about in places according to the humor of those who laid the bodies of the dead away.

There was a scaffold erected there, hewn of heavy logs, with the platform working on hinges beneath, while nailed to the beams were remnants of each lariat, rope, or chain which had served as the means of execution.

And on another part was cut the name of each indi-

vidual hanged there—that is, the name the victim had been known by when hanged.

How many of those had really been victims, innocent of what accused, was not stated; but where lynch law tries for a crime the innocent seldom are punished or the guilty escape, as is so frequently the case with the justice of civilization.

A damp, dark, weird place was this same Hangman's Gulch with its ghastly and ghostly memories, a strange trysting place for a young lady to go to meet any one.

Carrol Dean had no dread of the place.

There was not an atom of superstition in his composition, and he often took the short cut that way, whether by day or night, in going to Pocket City.

In fact, his was the nearest cabin to the weird spot within the limit of half a mile, where other miners would not pitch their houses within the circle of a mile of it, or search for claims there as though by common consent.

The miner stood like one spellbound, looking at the two in the valley for fully a minute before the idea struck him that he, too, might be discovered by them.

Then he drew back out of sight, and hunting another position, crept up to where the edge of the cliff was fringed with bushes.

Through them he peered, and was nearer the two in the gulch than before.

But though he could hear the voices, he was too far distant to overhear what was being said.

Bonnie Belle looked very handsome in her buckskin riding habit, gauntlet gloves, and slouch hat and plume.

Her horse stood near, patiently awaiting her, and the saddle was ornamented with silver until it shone gorgeously.

She had a lasso hanging at the horn, and a rifle hung from the cantel, and she knew well how to use both, having proven herself to be a very apt scholar in mastering border accomplishments.

She was switching a bush somewhat viciously as the old man was talking.

He had hitched his horse near, and stood before her, but no longer in the half-bent attitude he had shown in the saddle when talking to Carrol Dean.

Now he stood upright, and his movements were quick and decided, for he paced to and fro near the woman.

"That is no old man," muttered the miner, as he eyed him from head to foot.



"And he is no stranger here.

"Yes, his story to me was false, I am sure, now that I see him here and with Bonnie Belle.

"What can those two have in common, I wonder?"

It was growing dark now, and the two turned toward their horses, the man mounting and riding toward a rock and placing his hand in a crevice of it, while the woman nodded her head, as though understanding his action.

Then she leaped lightly into the saddle, and rode rapidly up the cañon.

The man turned down the cañon, riding within a short distance of the miner.

Carrol Dean watched him until he neared the opening into the trail, and saw that he again resumed his bent position in the saddle, his whole attitude changing.

The miner then went upon his way, down the steep path from the cliff, into Hangman's Gulch, and thence on the way which Bonnie Belle had gone.

He soon came out upon the trail, and just after the aged horseman had gone along, for, hearing the sound of hoofs, he had hung back out of sight.

"Now to go on to Pocket City, and see if I can get at the bottom of that mysterious meeting," he muttered as he turned into the trail to the valley camps.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE SPY AT WORK.

Nighttime was when Pocket City was in all its glory, if the scenes enacted under cover of the darkness could be so classed.

The miners were then ready for rest, carousing, gambling, or spinning yarns, with their ever ready revolvers to settle any disputes.

As has been said, the Frying Pan was an orderly house, and Bonnie Belle so kept it.

No saloon being there, it was thus not the scene of revels, and a good bed and excellent, well-cooked food could always be obtained.

As hostess of the Frying Pan, Bonnie Belle was always gentle but firm in her management, and one saw in her almost a different person from the Bonnie Belle of Devil's Den, her gambling and drinking saloon.

She was wont to appear there each night about ten o'clock, remain until midnight, and she always went there dressed in velvet and wearing jewels, while her face, it

seemed, became somewhat hardened in its expression from the contact, and thus she ruled them with a rod of iron.

The bartenders, faro dealer and soon the frequenters of the place seemed to stand in awe of her when she visited Devil's Den.

No matter how wild the orgy, how boisterous the men, when she came into the room there followed a hush, and all seemed subdued.

She had checked a dozen rows by simply commanding a cessation of hostilities, and if appealed to, as she was almost invariably, to settle a dispute, she decided with impartial justice, and her decision was final.

On this account she was often called "Justice" by the miners.

Devil's Den stood against an overhanging cliff, and a high stockade wall ran from the rear of it around the spur to the Frying Pan, which gave Bonnie Belle an opportunity to travel the three hundred yards between the hotel and the gambling saloon under cover.

The back of the hotel was also against the overhanging ridge, and the wing in which Bonnie Belle had her quarters was cut off by a stockade fence, forming a yard where innumerable wild flowers and trees had been planted.

There was a spring there, a rustic arbor, too, all to make the quarters and their surroundings as pleasant as possible.

Devil's Den was a very spacious building, built of logs and tough boards, and with a bar across the rear end, a faro table upon either side, a couple of other chance games and then a score of small tables for from two to half-a-dozen players.

Bonnie Belle was not as grasping as a landlord might have been, and she therefore sold no bad liquor nor cabbage leaf cigars, but furnished a fair equivalent for the money.

She aided the needy, was a good nurse to any one who was ill, and sent from the Frying Pan any delicacy that she could prepare to tempt their appetites.

When Miner Carrol Dean arrived at the hotel he decided to take supper there, and seeing Bonnie Belle, asked if it were too late to get a meal.

"It is never too late, Mr. Dean, to get anything to eat in my house," was the smiling answer, and supper was ordered.

Carrol Dean was anxious to have a talk with Bonnie Belle, so was glad to see that she did not avoid him.



"I saw some soldiers on the way to Pocket City, Bonnie Belle," he said as a means of starting the conversation.

"Yes, they put up with me, and I learned of your rescue of Buffalo Bill last Sunday."

"Did you learn the truth?"

"Perhaps not, but I was sure that you were in the right."

"I saw the scout in the hands of Powder Face Pete and a dozen of the gang that so often are seen at his heels."

"They claimed to have captured Silk Lasso Sam, the outlaw, but I knew that their prisoner was Buffalo Bill, for I had met him, and recognized him."

"They declined to give him up, and I was forced to kill Powder Face Pete and wound two others to get the scout free."

"There were a dozen, you say?"

"More than that, Bonnie Belle."

"Do you know any of the men?"

"Every one of them."

"Then look out for them, Deadshot Dean," was the significant reply.

"Thank you; but now let me ask if you have seen an old, gray-haired and bearded man, who seems to be in hard luck?"

"There is such a man here who came half an hour ago."

"Do you know who he is?"

"He gave his name as Peter Swain, and said that he was here to search for his son."

"I saw him as he passed my cabin, and offered him shelter, but he said that he must come on."

"His son, he told me, was Powder Face Pete, and being in hard luck, he had come here to look him up and get help."

"Of course, having killed his son, I felt sorry for him, and I came here to-night to ask you to give him several weeks' board at my expense, and also, say, a hundred dollars in cash, from me, only he need not know where it comes from."

Bonnie Belle turned her eyes full upon the miner.

Then she said, speaking very slowly:

"Deadshot Dean, you are too true a man to live in this wicked community, and I hope you will strike it rich very soon, and go away, for I suppose you have a home to go to?"

"Oh, yes, Bonnie Belle, and those there whom I dearly love; but is this old man here now?"

"Yes; I gave him a pleasant room and some supper."

"Does he know of his son's death?"

"Yes, for I told him, and the miners are going to make up a purse for him."

"Then put in my hundred, Bonnie Belle," and Deadshot Dean handed over his buckskin bag of gold dust.

"Thank you, I will, and I will urge him to leave the mines at once; but here he comes, now," and as Bonnie Belle spoke the old man came slowly toward them.

The old man came toward Bonnie Belle and Deadshot Dean with halting step and bent form.

"Ah, lady, your supper was tempting to me, but my appetite was gone with the tidings you gave me of the death of my son, his cruel murder by the hand of a cowardly assassin," said the old man, in a trembling voice.

Deadshot Dean started at these words, and bit his lips nervously, while he turned his gaze upon Bonnie Belle in a pleading way.

"No, sir, let me tell you how it was; but do you not recollect this gentleman, whom you met on your way here?" and she turned to the miner, who said:

"You passed my cabin, and I directed you how to reach Pocket City."

"I hope you did not miss the trail."

"Yes, I remember you now, but my eyes are dim, for I am getting old you see."

"No, the trail was broad and I followed it without a miss, and I was directed to come to this good lady's house and she has cared for me, and she also it was who told me of my good boy's murder."

"No, no, I did not say he was murdered, for he it was who brought his death upon himself, as he had captured the noted scout Buffalo Bill and intended to hang him as Silk Lasso Sam the outlaw chief of the road agents known as the Will-o'-the-Wisps."

"A miner interfered, recognizing the scout, and your son attacked him with others who were with him."

"Ah! that was it, was it?"

"Well, I always said poor Pete would die with his boots on; but you, sir, will you not go with me to my son's grave, for see, the moonlight makes it as light as day and I could sleep better once I saw poor Pete's last resting-place."

"You will go with me, will you not?"

Bonnie Belle had not given a hint that the miner who had killed Powder Face Pete was Deadshot Dean; but



she did not appear to have anticipated such a request as to have the man who had killed the desperado go to his grave with the father of the dead man.

She glanced quickly at the miner and said:

"No, Mr. Swain, I will accompany you to your son's grave to-night if you insist upon going."

"On the contrary, Bonnie Belle, I will go with Mr. Swain," was the unexpected response of the miner.

"But do you know the grave?" asked Bonnie Belle with intense surprise.

"Oh, yes, he was buried in Angels' Row, I heard from a miner who was at the burial."

"How good of them to bury him in Angels' Row," said the old man.

"Do you really insist upon going to-night, Mr. Swain?" asked Bonnie Belle.

"Oh, yes, for I cannot sleep until I see my son's grave."

"And do you insist, Deadshot Dean, in going with Mr. Swain?"

"Certainly, as he wishes it," was the response.

"Then I am ready, sir, as soon as I have gotten my supper," was the cool reply, and the miner went in to supper, which a Chinese servant had just announced with:

"'Melican man come eatee."

Whatever Deadshot Dean had lost his appetite for, after just meeting the old man at his cabin, the cause was removed upon sitting down to one of Bonnie Belle's good suppers, which tempted him to eat heartily.

Then he came out and joined the old man and Bonnie Belle, whom he saw talking earnestly together, but whose manner changed when they saw him approaching.

"I am ready, sir," said Deadshot Dean politely.

"I'll be with yer at once," and the two walked away together, the old man going with a tread as though it was hard for him to walk.

But the miner recalled how he had seen him move in the Hangman's Gulch, and so kept a brisk step purposely, watching his every movement.

The way led up on the ridge back of the hotel and camps, and by a winding trail.

It was all of half a mile before the miner halted upon the summit of the ridge, in the midst of a number of headstones and boards marking the last resting place

of those who had died in Pocket City, or more properly perhaps been killed there, for nearly all of those lying in that village of the dead had died with their boots on, if not shot on purpose in some personal encounter, killed by accident in some free fight, a state of affairs so common in Gold Dust Valley as to cause Bonnie Belle to wittily remark that she would as soon be killed on purpose as by accident, as the result was about the same.

To one row of graves apart from the others Deadshot Dean led the old man, and said:

"This is Angels' Row, and the newest made grave is that of your son.

"There it is, sir."

The moon shone brightly down upon the row of graves and the fresh earth readily marked the one where Powder Face Pete lay.

With a moan the old man sank down by the mound and rocked to and fro in deepest grief, the miner watching him closely the while.

When at last they turned away and retraced their steps toward The Frying Pan, Deadshot Dean muttered to himself:

"The old man is a fraud I am sure, and he and Bonnie Belle are allied in some plot without doubt.

"That plot I must know."

## CHAPTER IX.

### BORDER CHARITY.

Arriving at the door of The Frying Pan, Deadshot Dean parted with the old man and started on his lonely walk back to his cabin.

He was in deep meditation, for he was worried about this secret alliance between the fair Bonnie Belle and the man whom he now regarded as a fraud.

He was sure that the man was not a stranger to Pocket City, for he had caught him quite cleverly on the way up to the burying-ground by allowing him to lead at times, though not appearing to do so, and in each instance where a trail branched off he had taken the right one.

The way of the miner homeward lay around the spur and past the Devil's Den.

He had not intended entering there that night, but hearing laughter and loud voices, decided to go in.



Quietly entering the door, he sought a seat in an obscure corner and viewed the scene.

It was then eleven o'clock and the place was in full blast.

Glasses were clinking, the atmosphere was dense with smoke, for nine out of every ten were smoking, and profanity, boisterous laughter and loud talking made the place a perfect pandemonium.

The miner glanced about for Bonnie Belle, but she had not yet put in an appearance on her rounds.

Walking over to the faro bank, the miner stood watching the players for a while and then calmly put down a ten-dollar bill upon a card.

He won on the next deal, and without a miss kept in luck until he had won five hundred dollars.

The miners about him were surprised, for he had never been known to play before.

Just as another winning was handed over to him, Bonnie Belle came in from the rear of the saloon, through the door back of the bar.

She wore a dark-blue velvet dress, which fitted her form to perfection, and it was trimmed with gold lace and brass buttons, a sombrero richly embroidered in gold thread adorned her head, and a sash about her waist held her revolvers.

If she saw the miner Deadshot Dean she did not notice him, but coming forward, while instantly a hush fell upon the place, she said, in her full, rich voice:

"My pards, I have something to say to you, if you will hear me."

The silence was intense, money and glasses no longer clinked, every hat was doffed, every voice stilled, and the hush was an answer to her wish to be heard.

"I wish to say to you, my pards, that an old man came into the valley to-night, one whom I believe to be in distress.

"He was poorly mounted, poorly equipped and had but a few dollars in money, he told me.

"Luck has been against him of late, his years are many, and he came to Pocket City to find his son and ask his aid.

"Last Sunday his son was killed, and the news of his death I broke to him as gently as I could, and already has he been under the guidance of a kind miner to visit the grave of that son.

"I did not disguise from him the fact that his son was

in the wrong, that he, with others, had ambushed and captured Buffalo Bill, the noted scout, and intended hanging him, under the belief that he was Silk Lasso Sam.

"We all know what a calamity such an act would have been for Gold Dust Valley and all in it, and the miner deserves our thanks for saving us from it."

"But it was Silk Lasso Sam," called out a voice.

"It was not, for Buffalo Bill and a number of soldiers were here yesterday, and from the scout's own lips I had the truth of the affair, and I warn those who are plotting mischief against the miner who rescued him, claiming that he aided an outlaw, that they must desist or take the consequences."

As Bonnie Belle cast her eyes over the crowd there were some present who moved nervously, and eyes met eyes all over the room.

But not a voice was raised in reply, and Bonnie Belle continued:

"But now to this old man, who came here only to find his son dead. He does not wish to remain among strangers, and that he may go East to find his friends, I have decided to raise a purse for him. One generous miner has already placed in my hands a most liberal gift, the sum of which I will not name, as I do not wish to influence your offerings. But I will pass around my sombrero, and I wish you, my pards, to give what you can."

A cheer greeted the words of the woman, and then followed special calls from many voices:

"Pass her round, Bonnie Belle."

"Throw in ther dust, men."

"Pards, don't be mean."

"Bonnie Belle holds ther hat, pards, so give yer dust freely."

"Now set ther pace, Bonnie Belle, and we'll keep up with ther procession."

In the midst of these cries the old man himself had come into the saloon, and spying him and feeling that he was the man, as he was a stranger, a voice called out:

"There's the old pilgrim now, pards, so three cheers for Powder Face Pete's old dad."

Whatever the feeling had been for Powder Face Pete, and the delight that he had been called away, the white



hair of the old man commanded respect and the cheers were given with a will.

Among the first whom Bonnie Belle faced when she was passing around the sombrero for contributions for old Swain, was Deadshot Dean.

She started at seeing him, his presence there evidently being a surprise to her.

"You have given far more than your share, Deadshot Dean, so I pass you by," she said, quietly.

"Pardon me, no, for I desire to contribute again, having just been a large winner at faro," he said.

"You a winner?"

"Yes."

"I did not know that you played cards?"

"Oh, yes, but I never gambled before."

"It is unfortunate, then, that you did not lose, as this may cause you to gamble again."

"Perhaps, but here is my contribution for the old man," and he tossed a twenty-dollar bill into the hat.

The woman passed on with a strange look upon her face, one Deadshot Dean could not fathom.

Here it was a handful of gold dust from one, then a dozen silver dollars from another, next a buckskin bag of golden grains, again a bank note, to be followed with a gold piece, and so on until the hat became heavy, and calling a man near her to take it and lend her his, she went on her rounds.

"No, Barney, you are in ill luck yourself, so I'll chip in for you," she said, as a sickly-looking man held out a dollar.

Then she added:

"Come take your meals at The Frying Pan for a couple of weeks on my invitation, and you may build up."

"Bless you, Bonnie Belle," were the low-uttered words, and tears came into the man's eyes.

To another, an evil-faced man, who affected to be a miner dandy in dress, she said:

"Thorny, you chip in generously.

"Come, no nonsense, for you are well able, and have won heavily of late.

"Come, nothing less than a hundred will I take from you."

"A hundred devils!" growled the man.

"No, a hundred dollars.

"Put it in, or never darken the door of my house again."

"This is robbery," and the man drew some money from his pocket.

"If so, it is in a good cause."

"If you were in need to-morrow I'd do as much for you, so put in your money."

"There's fifty."

"I said a hundred."

"Then here goes," and the money was thrown in, while the woman, with a triumphant smile, passed on.

"That's the first time Thorny ever give a dollar ter charity, I'll bet," said a miner near.

"Yes, but Bonnie Belle gits 'em all," remarked one near.

At last she had gone the rounds of the saloon, and having kept a rapid calculation, as nearly as she was able to do, of what had been put in, she said:

"Here, Mr. Swain, there are about twelve hundred dollars in these two hats, and I am glad to say a very liberal contribution for you."

"I am more than thankful, Bonnie Belle," was the response, and then followed the words that closed the last chapter:

"Now I kin give ther tiger a turn."

The crowd were momentarily paralyzed at the words of the old man, if I may use the expression.

They looked at him, as he advanced toward the table, and then from one to the other, and when they saw him cover the ace of hearts with his money, fully fifty dollars, there arose a shout of admiration mingled with laughter, and cries of:

"Go in ter clip ther tiger's claws, old man."

"Pull ther financial tail clean out of him, daddy."

"Clip his ears, old pilgrim."

"Break the bank, grandpa."

"Waal, now, you hev got ther cheek o' a Government mule and no mistake."

"He's Powder Face Pete's dad, that's sartin."

"Of all old Methuselahs I ever seen he takes ther premium."

Such were the cries that went the rounds, until the old man having lost a hundred dollars, turned away from the faro bank with a look of disgust.

"Maybe thar's somebody w'u'd like ter play me?" he said, glancing unabashed over the crowd



"I don't mind gettin' my hundred back agin," said the man Thorny, and the crowd cheered.

They sat down to a table and the old man drew from one of his many and capacious pockets an old deck of cards.

"Give me a new deck, Bottles," cried Thorny.

"Oh, no, yer don't ring in no marked keerds on me," cried the old man, and the crowd laughed.

"These keerds is good enough ef they be a little worn; but they is honest keerds, and ef yer don't play with them I sets yer down as one who don't play fair."

"I'll go yer, old man, with any cards, so name yer limit."

"I hain't got none, fer ef I loses, I'll git ther pretty girl ter pass ther hat around ag'in."

"Call it a hundred."

"I'm yer man."

The game was begun, and the old man won.

Again they played and it was with the same result.

The third game was of the same kind, and the crowd was with the gray hairs in sympathy, for they cheered him all the while.

At last the miner Thorny had lost a thousand dollars, and rising from the table, said:

"I believe you're a cheat, old man."

"Prove it and let ther boys hang me," was the quiet remark, and pocketing his money he left the saloon, went to the Frying Pan's stables, and mounting, rode back upon the trail he had come.

But there was one watching him, from the moment he saw him enter the Devil's Den, who never lost sight of him until he rode away from The Frying Pan, when he ran on ahead of him upon the trail he had taken.

The old man rode away from The Frying Pan slowly.

Before going he had seen Bonnie Belle for a few minutes, and this had not escaped the eyes of the spy upon his actions.

He waited until he had gotten away from the camps and then urged his horse forward at a pace which the animal had hardly seemed capable of going.

He no longer rode bent in his saddle and like an old man.

As he neared the entrance to Hangman's Gulch he drew rein.

The moon peered through the foliage here and there,

lighting up the trail, but it did not reveal a form crouching by the roadside.

On came the horseman, to behold suddenly a dark object rise before him, run his arm up through the bridle rein of his horse and level a rifle full at his heart.

The old man was taken completely aback.

He did not offer resistance, for he was too fairly caught to attempt it.

"Hold, old man, for I wants a few words with you," said the man who had so quickly and successfully brought him to a halt.

"Who are you?"

The voice was no longer feeble with age, but stern and ringing now.

"I'm ther pard o' ther man you cheated at cards to-night."

"Who says I cheated?"

"I does."

"You lie!"

"Oh, no, your keerds was marked and yer cheated Thorny out o' his money, so hand it over or I takes you back and hands yer over to ther boys, and old as yer is they'll hang yer, thinking they is doing yer a favor ter save yer ther trouble o' dying."

"You would rob me?"

"I wants that money, and it's in yer left pocket."

"You must have watched me very closely."

"Oh, I did, and I wants that pack o' keerds fer luck."

"If I refuse?"

"I'll take yer back to ther boys."

"Curse you, here's your money."

"Hold on, yer might hev a gun in thet pocket, too, so I'll jist git it myself."

Then the man disarmed the old fellow, after which he took the money from his pocket.

"Now you are satisfied, I hope," queried the old man.

"Oh, no, I hain't, for yer as much as stole thet money was raised for yer, and I wants it, too, for there's a dozen poor fellers in ther mines as is desarving, and it would help them along mighty."

"You are going to rob me of all I have, then?"

"Oh, yes, for it's a case o' dog eat dog, yer know."

"Come, I wants all ther contribution yer got to-night."

The old man cursed bitterly, pleaded and became savage again.



But all to no use, for he had to give up his ill-gotten gains.

He could not tell who the man was who held him up, for he had a handkerchief stretched over his face with holes cut in it to see through.

He saw that he could do nothing but yield, but as the man robbed him he suddenly said:

"Here is money yer didn't git thar ter-night, so I turns it back to yer, and I doesn't want yer watch and chain, and ther diamonds yer wears. It's a queer beggar you is ter wear a fine watch and a diamond, but as yer didn't steal 'em in Pocket City, yer kin keep 'em."

"You are very kind," sneered the old man.

"Oh, yes, I means ter be just as well as generous.

"Now I'm going ter place yer belt o' arms right here in ther trail while you rides on ontill yer counts a hundred.

"Then turn back and come and git 'em, only yer won't find me here.

"I doesn't wish ter send yer unarmed through ther country."

"Thank you," sneered the old man.

"Now, go."

As he spoke the masked man placed the belt of arms in the trail, and the horseman rode on.

He counted a hundred very rapidly, turned, and rode back to the spot where he had been held up.

Quickly he dismounted and seized his weapons, leaped into the saddle again and dashed away.

He did not see or hear the man who had robbed him.

But that individual saw him, and muttered to himself:

"That leap into the saddle was the act of an athlete. Yes, he is no old man."

Then he took his handkerchief from his face and walked on up Hangman's Gulch.

He passed on to the secret path up the cliffside, took the trail then along the ridge, and halted only when he reached the door of Deadshot Dean's cabin.

Unlocking it he entered, closed and barred the door behind him, and then struck a light.

The light revealed that the robber of the horseman was none other than Deadshot Dean himself.

He took from his pocket the money he had gotten, the gold, dust, silver and gold coin and bills, and spread it out upon the table.

"One hundred and twenty dollars of this I gave him, so that I take back again.

"Thorny's money was won by cheating at cards, for I have seen him cheat, so that I will not give back, but put with the other to go to charity.

"Let me see, here are about two thousand dollars, or its equivalent, which I will turn over for the poor, sick miners in the camps, for they need it, and that man is no more old than I am, and is an impostor.

"What his game is I do not know, but I shall fathom it I feel certain by keeping my eye upon Bonnie Belle.

"Well, Carrol Dean, you are coming out, for you are detective, spy, gambler and road agent, all within twenty-four hours.

"But thank Heaven I robbed a robber and am not tempted to take a dollar for my own use, except that which I won to-night, and by the laws that govern betting that is honestly mine.

"Now for some rest," and throwing himself upon his cot, he was soon fast asleep.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE MYSTERIOUS TRAIL.

The sun was well above the horizon the next morning when Deadshot Dean arose from his cot.

He cooked his breakfast, hid away his own money and that which he had taken from old Swain, and then started down the valley, where he had left the horseman during the night.

His life as a miner and upon the frontier had made him a good trailer, and he at once started off on the tracks of the horse ridden by old Swain.

He saw that he had halted at the path leading to his cabin, and the tracks showed that the horse had stood there for a few minutes, at least.

"Yes, he doubtless dismounted and went up to my cabin, but finding all quiet, went on his way again, anxious not to have daylight find him in this vicinity.

"I wonder if he suspected me of being the one to hold him up.

"I hardly think so.

"Now to see where his trail will lead me."

He followed along on foot at a good, swinging step that cast behind him four miles an hour, and kept it up for several hours.



He had no difficulty following the trail, and halted only for a short rest and dinner.

That he was well hardened for work was shown by the springy step he kept up when again starting upon his way.

He did not halt again for some three hours, and though not mounted, was putting the miles behind him at a good pace.

What caused him then to halt was at finding the track he was following turn sharp off from the trail between Pioneer Post and Pocket City?

He turned off on the trail at once, and followed on up into a wild and rugged cañon for a mile or more.

Then it widened into a valley, fed by mountain streams, and with rich meadow lands, in which were traces of several horses having lately been feeding.

Up against the rocks were the remains of a camp-fire, the ashes still warm, and there had evidently been a camp for a couple or more days.

A close search revealed that there had been three horses staked out there and a couple of men had been camping at the place, for there was a wicky-up just large enough to shelter two.

The tracks of the horse he followed led directly to this camp, and Carrol Dean also made note of the fact that the same animal had left the place to go down toward the mining camps, the trail being a day or so older than the one coming back.

For some time the miner pondered over the situation, and then he decided to camp there all night.

He built up the fire, put his blankets under the shelter and after eating supper sat down for a quiet smoke in the gathering darkness.

"I think I see the intention," he muttered.

"That man came here with two or three men, doubtless only two, and while they camped in the cañon he went on to the mining camps for some purpose. Then he returned here, and the party went on their way, wherever that is. Now, who was that man, and who were his followers? I noticed that his hands did not look like those of an old man, and if his hair and beard were real, then he is prematurely gray. I can go on to-morrow following the trail, for it will be easier with four horses to follow than one. If I could run these Will-o'-the-Wisps to earth it would be a fortune in my pocket, that is certain, and a good service done. Then,

too, I would like to repay the confidence placed in me in that way, by those gallant army officers and that splendid fellow, Buffalo Bill.

"Well, I am tired, and have a hard day's tramp before me to-morrow, so I will turn in."

With this he sought his blankets and was soon fast asleep.

But at dawn he was up and had breakfast, and pushed on his way once more, now following the trail of the four horses.

He had gone but a few miles when he saw a horse feeding ahead of him upon the trail.

The animal had no saddle or bridle on, only a stake rope which had caught in some bushes and held him fast.

"It is the horse of the old man, and he has gotten away from him in the night, I suppose.

"He is thin, but a fine animal, so I will be glad to have the use of him."

He went up to the horse now and soon had his blankets made into a temporary saddle and the stake rope into a bridle.

Then he gave the animal rein and set off on the trail as before.

"If this horse could only talk, what could he not tell me?" he muttered.

With a halt at noon of an hour he once more renewed his way, to come suddenly to a broad, well-traveled stage trail.

There was the track of a coach having lately passed that way, going westward, but the trail he followed of these horses now went eastward.

On he pushed, now and then catching sight of the tracks not obliterated by the coach, until suddenly he heard the rapid clatter of hoofs.

Instantly he rode into the shelter of some bushes and waited ready to greet friend or foe.

On came the horseman, for there was but one, and he was riding like the wind.

A moment more and he dashed around a course in the trail and from the lips of the miner broke a cry, followed by the words:

*"It is Buffalo Bill!"*



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE TWO TRACKERS.

Buffalo Bill drew rein quickly, and the miner noted that the scout was riding with his reins held taut in his left hand, while in his right he carried his revolver for instant use.

There was something going wrong for the scout to be riding thus fast upon the stage trail and prepared to give battle in a second of time.

"What! my gallant rescuer, it is you?" cried Buffalo Bill, as he saw the miner ride out of his place of concealment.

"Yes, friend Cody, and I have just struck the stage road while following a most mysterious trail."

"Ah! the Will-o'-the-Wisps, I'll wager high on; but, now about that gothic steed of yours keeping up upon a run, for though an animal of fine points, he does not look like a racer and long stayer.

"Yes, and your equipments are not according to army regulations."

The miner laughed at the scout's criticism of his horse and outfit, and said:

"I started on the trail on foot, and overtook this horse upon the way.

"But let me tell you in a few words just what I have to report, so that I may go back to my cabin."

"Certainly; I can spare the time, as I suppose I can be of little service now in overtaking the stage."

"Has anything gone wrong?"

"Yes; the coach was attacked two miles up the trail, and what happened to the driver and his passengers I do not know, or that they were robbed or not. But there is a dead outlaw lying in the trail back at the scene, and there seems to have been a hot fight, for a horse is also dead there, and another wounded. I had started upon a run along the coach trail, as Horseshoe Ned, the regular driver, is laid up this run, and a new man is in his place. I came out into the trail beyond where the hold-up was, and heard distant firing. From the rocks coming down the trail, I could not at first ascertain whether the firing was up or down the trail. But I saw that the coach had passed the point where I was, and so rode in this direction. Coming upon the scene, after a ride of a couple of miles, I found the dead outlaw as I said, a dead and a wounded horse. How many passengers there were in the

coach I do not of course know, but some of them had the nerve to resist robbery and they called in the chips of one of the road agents. What damage the people of the coach sustained I cannot find out until I overhaul it. The outlaw had been robbed by his fellows, I judge, for they were gone, though in my hurry to overtake the coach I could not take time to find their retreating trail."

"If it were the party I followed, there were but three of them."

"And one dead? Oh, how I would have liked to have come upon that scene, for I am sure I could have caused the Will-o'-the-Wisps to have to recruit their forces."

"I only wish that you had, or that I had been a little earlier on the scene, that I might have prevented a tragedy at least.

"But as you are going on after the coach, can I not ride on to the scene of the hold-up and find the trail, leaving you a line about what I discover, so as to save you time, as I suppose you will return?"

"Certainly, as soon as I have overtaken the coach and got what information I can.

"It is a rough road ahead for wheels, for miles, so I can overtake it readily, and if you will only get what points you can and leave me word, I will feel obliged, while I may get back before you leave."

"Perhaps so."

"Now make your report, Pard Dean, in case I do not see you soon again."

"I will tell you just what has happened and leave you to be the judge of what the situation is."

"Fire away."

Carrol Dean then made known to Buffalo Bill the fact of the old horseman coming by his cabin, and how going on to the valley he had discovered him in Hangman's Gulch, talking with Bonnie Belle, together with the other events of the evening before.

"Now go slow, and don't run yourself into trouble or too great danger, for I cannot afford to lose you, and I have perfect faith, as has Colonel Dunwoody, after what Captain Caruth and Surgeon Powell told him of you, that you are the right man in the right place. Now I am off," said Buffalo Bill, after listening carefully.

With a grasp of the hand the scout was away, once more riding like the wind.

Buffalo Bill rode rapidly to make up for lost time.



The trail was rough and dangerous at places, but he eased his horse over like the skillful rider that he was.

The miles flew behind him rapidly, until in an hour he had gained so much on the coach that, halting to listen, he could hear the distant rumble of the wheels ahead.

Another half hour and he saw the red coach flashing in the sunlight as it moved along the foliage-clad trail.

"That is not Ribbons on the box, and it is certainly not Horseshoe Ned, for I am sure that he did not come out on this run," he said, as he saw a stranger on the box.

"Well, he drives like an expert, and is sending the horses along at a slapping pace.

"Come, old fellow, stretch your legs at a better rate, if you wish to overtake that train soon."

So saying, the scout touched his spurs to the flanks of his horse and away the animal bounded with increased speed.

The clatter of the hoofs behind then caught the ears of the driver and he turned his head quickly.

A moment more and he had drawn rein, seized his rifle from alongside of him upon the box and stood like a man at bay.

"Ho, he shows fight, taking me for an outlaw, I guess, for he is a stranger in these parts."

So saying, the scout rode forward at a walk, while he raised his hands above his head in token of peaceful intention.

As Buffalo Bill approached, he eyed the stranger upon the box closely, and muttered:

"The driver has been killed, that fellow is a tender-foot, and will fill me full of lead if I don't go slow."

The man on the box was dressed in a suit of stylish, dark-gray clothes, and wore a black slouch hat.

He wore no mustache or beard, was a handsome man, scarcely thirty, and had the look of one who would be a dangerous foe if aroused.

"Ho, pard, I am no enemy, so put up your gun and we'll get acquainted," said Buffalo Bill.

"Who are you?" asked the stranger on the box.

"Chief of scouts at Pioneer Post, and I am known as Buffalo Bill."

"Buffalo Bill! How much I have heard and read of you! But, how am I to know that you are telling me

the truth? For, I have discovered, one knows not whom to trust in this country."

"Well, sir, I came out upon a scout to look after the safety of Ribbons, who was to drive the coach through this run. I heard firing, and upon riding to the scene found a dead outlaw there, two horses and every evidence that the coach had been held up by road agents. I then put spurs to my horse to overtake the coach and find out what had happened."

"I believe you now, sir, after getting a better look at you, for a man with such a face as you have is no villain."

"Thank you, sir," and the scout raised his hat.

"You were right in your surmise, for our coach was attacked."

"Yes, that is evident."

"We were in a stream, watering the horses, when we were held up.

"There were two of us inside, fellow-passengers, and I, not caring to be robbed, opened fire.

"The result was that the coach was riddled, as you see, the driver was shot, my fellow-passenger was killed, and after I was robbed, with only the satisfaction of killing one of the scoundrels, while I got this wound in my shoulder, as you see;" and Buffalo Bill noticed that the speaker's shoulder and sleeve were stained red.

"It was a mistake to fire upon a force whose strength you did not know, sir; but let me see your wound, for it may be serious."

"Oh, no, I think not, for it has stopped bleeding, and the surgeon at the fort can soon put me to rights. By the way, how far is the fort from here?"

"Some fifteen miles, sir. But I congratulate you upon your nerve;" and the scout saw the dead body of Ribbons, the driver, in the boot, and in the coach another face upturned in death.

"One needs nerve to knock about the world, sir, and that is about my occupation, I may say profession, for I am going out to the frontier for a short run for sport, but suppose I will have to remain now some time to g



an outfit and remittances from home; for, though an American, I live in Cuba, and the outlaws stripped me of all I had with me."

"That is unfortunate sir; but you will find warm and generous friends at the fort, if you have no acquaintances there."

"Not a soul, sir. I am friendless and penniless, a bad situation to be in, is it not?" and the stranger smiled.

"Well, yes, but as I am your first acquaintance in the wild West, I will indorse you, sir, at the sutler's for all you may need."

"You are very kind, sir, just the man that I have read that you were. Permit me to introduce myself as Austin Marvin, a United States citizen, but for years a Cuban sugar planter, who, having a fair income, manages to get rid of it in knocking about the world."

The scout was pleased with his new-found friend, and after looking at his wound, placing upon it a bandage of cold water, and telling him to let the horses show the way, as they would take the right trail where there were dividing ones, he set off on his ride back to search for the road agents, asking Mr. Marvin to request Colonel Junwoody to send a dozen of his scouts out to join him at Deep Dell Brook with all speed.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MINER'S NOTE.

"There's a fellow I like: frank, brave and whole-voiced, with nerve enough to get him out of any scrape, unless he tackles a Wild Western road agent. There he made a mistake."

So mused Buffalo Bill as he rode on his way back to the scene of the tragedy.

He did not go back at the speed he had ridden to overtake the coach, for he wished to spare his horse, and it was just three hours after his crossing Deep Dell Brook that he returned to it.

He hoped to find the miner there.

But in this he was disappointed.

Instead, he found a stick stuck up in the trail, and in the top, which was split, was a slip of paper.

The scout felt that he had work before him, so he first watered his horse and then staked him out to feed, after taking off the saddle and bridle, so that the animal could have a complete rest.

Then he sat down to read the note, which had been left by the miner and was quite lengthy.

It was as follows, written in an educated, legible hand:

I examined the cliffs on either side but found only trace of two places where men had been lying in ambush, and so I feel sure that they must have been those I followed. There is but the track of one horse leading away from the spot, and that one went into the stream. I went up the stream for half a mile and found the spot where the trail left the water. You can ride direct to an overhanging rock and there you will find it, and it bears away to the northward up the ridge.

Having read it, the scout at once wrote on a slip of paper:

Come to overhanging rock up Deep Dell Brook half a mile, and take my trail from there.

B. B.

Then he started up the stream, following the water, as the banks were impassable.

Half a mile up he came to the overhanging rock which Carrol Dean had referred to, and he had not the slightest difficulty in finding the trail.

He at once followed it on up the ridge and on for several miles, when it became too dark for him to go further.

Then he went into camp for the night.

He had marked the trail for his men to follow, and knew that they would be on hand at Deep Dell Brook that night, ready to start on after him at daylight.

As he would have but a few miles the start of them, and would have to find the trail as he went along, while he would mark his for them to follow, they would be able to travel more rapidly and overtake him before noon.

He was surprised that the coach had been held up



with only three men, as every evidence revealed, and said to himself:

"Silk Lasso Sam was there, for no other would dare do it.

"The outlaw killed was not Silk Lasso Sam, and there is only one horse trail here, but two men must have escaped.

"One of them went on foot and the other on horseback, and the latter must be Silk Lasso Sam, with the booty.

"I should much like to get that young man's money and valuables back for him, so I will find out just where this trail ends.

"Thanks to Deadshot Dean, I have a chance to go on without delay, and the boys will not be long in overtaking me."

Wrapping himself in his blanket, Buffalo Bill slept as serenely as though upon a bed and in perfect safety.

Just as the first ray of light came, however, he was up and on the trail again, to follow it to its end.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CONCLUSION.

He rode on at an easy gait, for the trail of the single horse was readily followed, and at last the country became hard and barren—to such an extent that he could no longer follow the tracks.

He tried all he could to go on from where he could see the last indentations of hoofs in the ground, but in vain.

So he decided that his only course was to wait until his men came up, and then he could divide the force into three parties.

One of these could move away to the right in a semi-circle.

Another could go in a semi-circle to the left, and the third hold straight on, and the three could meet at a certain point ahead.

In this way they must cross the trail at some place, most surely.

He had just decided upon this course, when he heard

the sound of hoofs, and a band of scouts, which had been sent from the fort when the robbery of the coach was learned, came into sight.

At their head was the surgeon-scout, Frank Powell, and that they had ridden hard, their horses showed.

"Ho, Doc, I am awfully glad to see you, for I have run aground," cried Cody.

"And we are glad to find you, Bill, so soon."

"It was good of you to come."

"Oh, I thought I saw a chance to be in at the capture of the fox, so I came along."

"Good!"

"We got to Deep Dell just at nightfall, and found you in note, so we went into camp, but were at the rock before light, and pushed on from there on your trail.

"Now, what have you found out?"

"Nothing."

"There is no trail here."

"The ground won't allow a horse-track to show."

"That is bad."

"And it is the same thing as far as Sandy Creek, I guess, so I waited for you to come up."

"Here we are."

"Well, we'll have breakfast, and then my plan is to push a party straight ahead to Sandy Creek."

"Another can circle to the right, another to the left, and all meet at the creek, and if we do not find a trail, shall be greatly mistaken."

"We can but try, Bill."

There was a halt of an hour for rest and breakfast, and then the scouts were divided into three parties.

One went directly forward, the two others separated to the right and left—one, under Surgeon Powell, the other commanded by Buffalo Bill.

The country was very wild, very barren, and there was not a chance for any animal to live there upon vegetation, it was so scant, and only found here and there in spots.

There was, far in the distance, a mountain range rugged, lofty, and the base washed by the waters of Sandy Creek.



Creek, a stream which from a small brook in dry weather becomes a mighty river when the floods come.

It was full of quicksands, and only here and there was there a crossing made by buffalo, deer, and other animals, but these were not frequently traveled, as the range was as devoid of vegetation as the surrounding country.

The stream ran in a crescent around the range, which ended there abruptly, and the sides were precipitous, and not broken even by cañons.

It was upon the banks of the creek, just at nightfall, that the three parties met.

They had had a hard and fatiguing ride of it, and horses and men felt the jaunt.

Just upon the bank there were a few stunted trees, and some grass—enough for a night's feed for the horses, while water could be gotten from the creek.

"We will camp here to-night, Doc," said Buffalo Bill.

"Yes, we can do nothing else."

"It is lucky we found these trees and grass, or we would have it rough among the rocks."

"You saw no trace of a trail, Bill?"

"Not the photograph of one, doctor."

"Nor did I."

"If the outlaws have a retreat in these lands, then I do not know where it is, and the stories of having large numbers of cattle and horses are not so."

"No, indeed, for nothing could live here."

"Nor in the range yonder."

"So it seems, but we will have a look at that to-morrow, returning in time to get back to grass at night, for the horses will begin to suffer."

The night passed without disturbance, save the yelping of a wolf or the cry of a panther coming from the Rocky Range, as the ridge was called, across the stream.

The next morning the party crossed at a buffalo ford, and went to the range.

They had not ridden far when they came upon the trail of three horses.

Immediately a cheer arose from the band of scouts, and their horses were pushed forward at their topmost speed.

It was a hard ride, but in an hour they came in sight of three horsemen.

One of these was the old man who had claimed to be the father of Pete Swain; the other two looked the part of outlaws.

At the command of Buffalo Bill to halt, the fugitives wheeled and opened fire.

The conflict was short and sharp. Two scouts were wounded, and all three fugitives were killed.

When Buffalo Bill rode up to examine the dead bodies he found that the old man was no old man at all. The whiskers and hair he wore were false, and when they were removed the face and features of Silk Lasso Sam—the Will-o'-the-Wisp of the Trails—were revealed. The other two were recognized as members of the band, and, with the spoils of the coach robbery, which were discovered in their saddle-bags, the party rode back to the post.

A week later Bonnie Belle, the owner of the hotel at Pocket City, explained to Deadshot Dean that Silk Lasso Sam, the outlaw, was her brother.

This fact had been known only to Buffalo Bill and Surgeon Frank Powell, and it explained her private conferences with the graybeard who afterward proved to be an outlaw.

Bonnie Belle had for years been trying to persuade her brother to leave his course of crime, and once had assisted him to escape, and sent him East, on his promise that he would leave the West forever.

He had returned, however, and now that he was killed Bonnie Belle bade good-by to Pocket City to go East, as her only object in remaining in that wild country was to reform her brother.

THE END.

Next week's issue (No. 65) will contain "Buffalo Bill's Run-Down; or, The Red-Hand Renegade's Death."

The Red-Hand Renegade was a tough customer, as he had Indian as well as outlaw followers to back him up.

The story of how Buffalo Bill ran him down will make your blood tingle with excitement.





# THRILLING ADVENTURE



Contest pretty near half-way over—letters coming in by the basket full—things humming generally—good prospects for a warm wind-up.

That's the present situation. Look on page 31 for details.

## A Sailing Adventure.

(By A. D. Edwards, Ohio.)

One summer a few years ago when I was at the seashore an old boat floated in. Myself and three other boys got it and put a mast in it and also made a sail.

The next day a good breeze was blowing, so we got in the boat and started out.

We got out a good way and the boat started to leak, so we came about and started for the shore, but she leaked too fast for us. After we got in all but about five miles the old boat sank.

So it was a case of swim. We swam to the nearest rocks, which were about a mile and a half away.

The tide was coming in and had got most up to us when a boat came out from the shore and took us in.

You may believe we felt pretty good to get back to shore and we never tried to sail in an old, leaky water-logged boat again.

## A Hot Time in Atlanta.

(By Sam Bokeritzki, Georgia.)

On a Saturday morning in May, 1902, as I walked along the street I heard that a negro by the name of Will Richardson was fighting some officers on the outskirts of our town. So mixing together with a crowd we rode out there on a car.

When we reached there the negro and another one had barricaded themselves in a house where they had killed one officer by the name of Ed. Battle. We had just got off the car when one of the negroes, whose name is Henry King, stepped out from the house and was looking about him where he could escape best, when two police sergeants covering him with their rifles ordered him to surrender. He submitted, but they had no sooner handcuffed him that a shot was heard and Officer Tom Grant dropped dead.

By this time a lot of citizens and police had gathered all with rifles, and becoming enraged at this murder started to shoot at the house where the negro took

refuge. The negro jumped out from the house where he was and running to a barn opened fire.

He fired three shots and Officers Crabtree, Osborne and a citizen fell mortally wounded, the officers dying a few minutes afterward. About twelve citizens and that many policemen had either been killed or wounded before they made the man they captured run out from the house.

They set fire to it, and Officer Covington, catching sight of the negro, fired three shots which killed the negro. Just then two negroes jumped out from a sewer and started to run, but they didn't take more than three steps when they fell dead, riddled with bullets. Among the people who had close calls were Chief of Police Ball a bullet flying so near his head that he heard the wing of it, and Sheriff Nelms had a bullet cut off some of his beard. And the place where I was standing was so much fired at that we had to lie down on the ground to escape the bullets. After the house burned up they took the negro's remains out and dragged it for many blocks before they stopped.

It is said that there never was so much excitement in Atlanta before except when Sherman set fire to it.

## My Adventure With a Tramp.

(By Harry Ashton, Ind.)

It was one bright morning last April when I was returning from taking my cows to pasture. I had ridden into the barn and was removing the saddle from my pony when a stranger appeared in the door.

He was a tough-looking character, with a beard of a week's growth. He spoke up and said:

"It was a pretty cold night."

"Was it?" I replied.

"Yes, I slept in a box-car all night, and got pretty cold before morning."

I noticed he was sizing up the barn pretty well, and made me feel kind of funny, but I did not say anything. At this time I was raising guinea pigs and rabbits and was just going out to feed them some carrots. S



got my basket and looking in I saw I had forgotten my knife. I set the basket down and told him I was going into the house after a knife. I went into the house and got the knife, at the same time putting my father's big .38 revolver into my pocket. When I returned to the barn again I dropped the knife into the basket and started for the rabbit yard, which was only about six feet from the barn door. I opened the gate and then gave it a slam shut again to make him believe I had gone into the yard, but I did not go in. I just stepped in behind the door and waited to see what he would do.

Just a few days before this my father had made me a present of a pair of beautiful lamps for my pony carriage, and I admired them very much. Now, what do you think Mr. Tramp did but, to go right up to the buggy and place them under his coat and walk off. I ran down the alley after him, and with my revolver drawn I told him to hold up or I would stop him. He stopped without any more words. I then asked him where he was going with my lamps; he said he was just going down the street. He gave them back and started off at a rapid gait.

I was not frightened as I thought, but one of the neighbors came in and wanted to know what was the matter, that I was as white as a ghost and was trembling like a leaf.

I now began to feel frightened and got sick at my stomach. At noon when my father came home I told what I had done; he said I was a very brave boy and soon after this he made me a present of a twenty-two calibre revolver.

### A Swimming Story.

(By Ernest Enright, Iowa.)

One fine day in the year 1900, I thought I would go swimming down to the Austin Bridge, as they call it. I went down there and had to go across the bridge, to get to the good swimming part.

I went across and had a swim. There were no boys down there, so I came out and was going across when I heard a train whistle.

I had no time to think, so I threw myself over the edge of the bridge.

I had to hang there till the train got across the bridge. I did not know how to get up then. I did not want to jump, because it was so far down, and the creek was low. I happened to look at my feet, and saw a bolt sticking out, and stepped on it. I pulled myself up inch by inch till I got up. Only for that bolt I would not have been writing this now.

### A Close Call.

(By Archie Brainard, Mich.)

Last February I was out hunting and shot seven rabbits in the forenoon. I had just put my ferret in a hole and run two rabbits out, but the brush was so that I couldn't get a shot at them, so I let the dogs run them around. They ran them in a hole about four rods from where they started. I put my ferret in the hole to run them out, but there was only one hole, so I couldn't get my ferret or the rabbits out. I went to a house about a

quarter of a mile away and got a spade and dug them out. I was just putting the rabbits in my game sack when the hammer of the gun, which I had between my legs, caught in my boot and when I moved my boot it let the hammer go down and hit the cap. The gun went off and blew my hat off my head and came within one inch of hitting me in the face. After that I was more careful about handling guns. I got twenty rabbits altogether that day. I have read all of the Buffalo Bill stories up to date but four.

### Tied to the Track.

(By J. F. Jeffreys, Texas.)

The story I am going to write happened near a small town (Rosebud) in Falls County, Texas.

Three of my friends and myself had started from Rosebud to go to the horserace that was to take place about one and one-half miles northeast of town. We had started on foot up the railroad and had got only about half way and were nearing a small cut, when we heard the whistle of the local behind us. We then decided to run through the cut ahead of the train, as it was only a short distance. We all broke into a run.

I was some fifteen or twenty yards in advance of the others and about half way through the cut when I saw a man lying across the track. I thought him asleep and began to halloo at him to get off the track, but he did not answer or move, and when we got to him we saw he was tied to the track, with a rag stuffed in his mouth.

Then we surely did some hustling to get him cut loose before the train got there, but we finally got him off the track, and none too soon, for as it was, myself and one of my friends lost our hats and never found anything but a few small pieces of them after the train passed by.

We didn't care for that, as we had saved the man's life. He proved to be a German and had been attacked by tramps, was robbed and tied to the track for the train to finish their dastardly work.

He was robbed of \$75, his watch, chain, hat and coat. He never recovered anything, but said he was glad to get off with his life.

### Caught in a Stampede.

(By Berger Olson, Massachusetts.)

While Evans and some companions were camping for the night on a high tableland, which ended a few miles away in an abrupt drop of two hundred feet, a storm swept through the mountains. Made nervous by the lightning, the herd of fifteen hundred cattle stampeded in the direction of the precipice. Evans and his men mounted hurriedly and circling to the front of the mad-dened cattle, tried with whoops and revolver shots to turn them back.

In the dense blackness of the night Evan's horse missed his footing and went down in a heap, one leg in a gopher hole. The horse of a cowboy named Davis, running close behind, stumbled over Evans' horse, and Davis, too, came to the earth and lay still, unconscious.

Fifty yards away came the herd, and a short flash of lightning showed Evans the situation. The swiftly-



moving sea of cattle reached one hundred yards each way. Unable to arouse Davis, and never thinking of leaving his disabled comrade, Evans took the only chance of saving both. He emptied his own revolver and his companion's into the center of the herd, cutting a breach in the front of the mass. Then throwing the inanimate form of Davis over his shoulder, he awaited his opportunity. As one of the leaders brushed by, Evans, with one movement, put the body of Davis across the shoulders of the steer, and mounted also. Vainly the animal leaped, bucked and side-jumped. With his legs wrapped tightly around the body of his mount, Evans drove his spurs deep in, and held himself and Davis in place.

The steer, wild with rage, agony and fright, rapidly left the herd in the rear, and veering to the right in a furious gallop, carried his riders out of danger. Then Evans rolled off the back of his strange rescuer, and a half hour later, when his cowboys turned the herd at the rim of the canyon, and rode back to look for the foreman and Davis, they found them, both unconscious. The weary steer, with his sides covered with blood, lay exhausted a short distance away.

The outfit ordered a medal for Evans, and the steer has been pensioned for life on the best alfalfa in the valley.

### In the Planing Mill.

(By R. G. Palmer, California.)

I started to work at a planing mill, and being a green-horn did not know how to keep my hands out of the machinery.

I was always fooling with something.

One day I was cutting fancy fence pickets. I had got the tops cut off of most of them, and when you get the tops off so many you push them away with your hands. Well, I was working and wasn't paying much attention to my work, and the first thing I knew I had my hand in the saw.

The blood commenced to spurt out of my fingers, and the first thing I did was to run to one of my fellow workmen and borrow a handkerchief.

He almost fainted.

Then I jumped on my wheel and went to the doctor. When I unwrapped my hand I found that my thumb and forefinger were cut off at the first joint. The other three were cut pretty badly, too.

That was the last time I worked at a mill.

### A Runaway.

(By Chas. Douglas, Ohio.)

One day in June I was driving our horse, whose name was Floe, down a steep hill in Pennsylvania. My mother and I were riding together, and my father, sister and uncle in the other buggy, which was ahead of us. We were going down the hill, and I was not giving much attention to my horse, when all at once the hold-back strap snapped in two and Floe started.

It scared me, but I held on to the lines and did my best to stop her, but I couldn't do it. The other team was ahead of us and I told them to get out of the way.

They tried to, but were too slow, and our buggy hit their's and upset and knocked their's clear over on it's top.

That frightened their horses, and they started to run, with my sister and father under the top. My mother and I were thrown out. I was knocked unconscious.

The miracle of it was that my sister was not hurt at all, but my father was hurt so badly that he had to be sent to the hospital for over six months.

I was hurt pretty badly, but I was well in a few weeks.

### A Lineman's Last Day's Work.

(By Walter Handy, N. J.)

It was on a bright day in January that I was in school looking at my lessons when all at once I looked out of a window and there I saw a man up a great big telegraph pole repairing a wire when all of a sudden I saw him drop and catch in a lot of wires, and there he had to stay until another lineman came to get him out.

There must have been about one hundred wires on the pole. It was quite a long time before he could do anything with the poor man in the wires, but after a while he managed to get a rope around his waist and then he put the rope over a cross-arm and he let him down very slowly.

He was at least forty feet from the ground. He had caught hold of a live wire by mistake and was receiving about 1500 volts of electricity.

I was not the only one that saw it, for in less than five minutes there were about 200 people on the spot, but they could not see him for he was covered with a blanket as soon as he reached the ground, and then the undertaker took charge of his body.

The next day the coroner held an inquest over his body and the next day after he was laid away to fix those wires which have no end.

When I went back to school. My teacher and myself were so nervous and excited that we could not work at any of our lessons and the teacher had to dismiss the class which she was teacher of, and I did not go again for two days.

I would not like to see an accident of that kind again.

### My Mistake.

(By Frank Speedel, Wash.)

I remember once in my younger days how I was nearly frightened to death by an eel which I mistook for a snake.

It happened that my father and I went fishing in a small creek not far from our house. After fishing half the day, and not catching a single fish, it made me pull my line up with unusual force when I felt a bite, so I could have at least caught one fish, but the confounded line went straight to my face.

I felt something wriggling all over my face, so I pulled it away faster than it came, and found an enormous snake, as I thought, dangling from the line. I threw my pole down, and went running in the direction of my father as fast as my short legs could carry me. I stumbled into a ditch of thick mud up to my waist and



could not get out till my father came to my aid. I cried excitedly as he came up:

"Oh, father! I saw a big snake, which I thought would surely sting me to death!"

My father soon came to the place of excitement, took the snake in his hand, to my surprise, and laughed:

"Ha, ha! you little fool! you have been frightened by an eel," he said.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### What Do You Think of This Boy?

Editor Buffalo Bill Weekly—

Dear Sir: I have the pleasure of reading the Buffalo Bill stories, which are sent from the States to England, and I like them very much. But reading them does not say if he is alive now, as I should very much like to know. If you could answer this letter in one of the Buffalo Bill numbers I should be very glad. I get them over in England about every six or seven weeks.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM OWEN.

Of course, Buffalo Bill is alive. Every boy in America and pretty nearly every boy in England knows that. Buffalo Bill is at present traveling through the country. In the fall he will take a party of wealthy gentlemen on a hunting trip in Wyoming.

 \$1 worth of Tricks & Make-ups, sent postpaid for 25 cents stamps or silver. A nice Moustache or full Beard, Irish or Side Whiskers, any color, bottle Spirit Gum to stick them on. Box of Burnt Cork to blacken up, tin Rubber Mouth, big teeth, secret & apparatus for performing the great vanishing half-dollar trick. This big offer is to get your address to send my large list, cat's of plays, wigs, tricks & agit. latest novelties. Mention paper you saw this in and I will also put in a Heavy GOLD plate finger Ring FREE, send size. Address Chas. Marshall, M.D., Lockport, N.Y.

**STAMPS**—100 all different from Africa, China, Asia, etc., only 10c. 50 dif. 6c. 7 dif. unused Cuba or Porto Rico only 10c. 6 dif. unused Philippines only 10c. 24 dif. Canada only 10c. 29 dif. Japan only 10c. 200 different only 25c. Send for our approval sheets. Agents wanted 50 per cent. com. **CARL M. WILLIS STAMP CO., Sullivan, Indiana.**

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Will be paid for the following Weeklies:

True Blue Weekly, Numbers 43, 46, 49.  
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Any boys who have copies of the above mentioned numbers should communicate at once with STEWART, Box 192, New York City. Unless you have one or more of the numbers above do not write, as no other numbers of the Weeklies are wanted.

# SEVEN COMPLETE FISHING TACKLE ASSORTMENTS GIVEN AWAY AS PRIZES

Look on the Back Cover of No. 52 to See What They Are Like.

IF YOU WIN ONE of these famous fishing tackle assortments you will have everything you could possibly need in the way of fishing tackle. You will have such a complete assortment that you will be able to **MAKE MONEY** retailing hooks, lines and sinkers to your comrades who have not been fortunate enough to win prizes. You may become a dealer in fishing tackle if you win one of these prizes, for you will have a complete assortment of over

**NINE HUNDRED HOOKS of All Kinds,**

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## HOW TO WIN A PRIZE.

This new Prize Anecdote Contest is on the lines of the one which has just closed—one of the most successful contests ever inaugurated. Every boy in the country has had some **THRILLING ADVENTURES**. You have had one yourself—perhaps you were held up by robbers, or were nearly run over by a train; perhaps it was a close shave in a burning building, in scaling a precipice, in bear-hunting, or swimming; whatever it was, **WRITE IT UP**. Do it in less than 500 words, and mail it to us with the accompanying coupon.

All entries must be in before September 1. The contest closes on that date.

The Prizes Will Be Awarded to the Seven Boys Sending in the Best Stories.

Look on the back cover of No. 52 for photograph and description of one of the prizes.

To Become a Contestant for These Prizes cut out the Anecdote Contest Coupon printed herewith, fill it out properly, and send it to **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**, care of Street & Smith, 238 William Street, New York City, together with your anecdote. No anecdote will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

### COUPON.

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